The 'Book' of Travels: Genre, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage, 1250–1700

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The 'Book' of Travels: Genre, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage, 1250–1700

Edited by

Palmira Brummett

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This work is dedicated to the libraries, librarians, and bibliophiles whose preservation of books has ensured our access to the texts, maps, images, and travelers contained herein.

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A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Joan Pau Rubiés, in his essay, has used the Wade-Giles scheme for transcribing Chinese. For Arabic, Persian, and Turkic languages there is no single, unified transliteration scheme. Many of the names from those languages employed here are filtered through European language texts or have taken various forms depending on their ethnolinguistic contexts. Some, such as names of dynasties or rulers, have become part of common English usage. We have thus provided proper names in the text in simplified form, reserving full diacritics for words and titles glossed within the text, direct citations in the notes, and names and titles in the bibliography where appropriate. Transliteration in those cases is consistent with that used in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. We have preferred the elided form of composite words, hence Ẓafarnāma and Ilkhan.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Pompa Banerjee is Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Colorado at Denver. Her work on early modern literature and culture reflects her interest in various forms of cross-cultural contact and exchanges between Europe and the East. She has published several essays and a book, *Burning Women: Widows, Witches and Early Modern European Travel Narratives of India* (Palgrave, 2003).

Palmira Brummett is Professor of History and Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of Tennessee. Interested in the rhetorics of cross-cultural encounter, she is the author *of Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908–1911* (S.U.N.Y., 2000) and *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (S.U.N.Y, 1994). Her recent articles address the conceptual framing of the early modern Mediterranean and the Ottoman-Hapsburg-Venetian frontier zone, and her current book project is on the early modern mapping of Ottoman space.

Mary Baine Campbell, a literary historian and poet, is professor of English and American Literature at Brandeis University and author of two books relevant to the topic of this collection: *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Cornell, 1988); and *Wonder and Science: Imagining New Worlds in Early Modern Europe* (Cornell, 1999 and 2004). She is interested in the histories of travel writing, anthropology and early natural science, and also works in the field of utopian studies as teacher, scholar, and fledgling writer.

Daniel K. Connolly received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Art History at Western Michigan University. A specialist in medieval art, his research focuses on the mechanics of imagined pilgrimage in medieval maps and on the labyrinth pavements of Gothic cathedrals. Publications include an essay on the labyrinth at Chartres, and articles on the maps of

Matthew Paris, on which subject he is currently writing a book-length study.

David J. Roxburgh (Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, 1996) is Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Professor of Islamic Art History at Harvard University. He is the author of *Prefacing the Image: The Writing of Art History in Sixteenth-Century Iran* (Brill, 2001) and *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (Yale University Press, 2005), and co-author with Mary McWilliams of *Traces of the Calligrapher: Islamic Calligraphy in Practice c. 1600–1900* (Houston Museum of Fine Arts, 2007). His articles include studies on various aspects of the arts of the book, painting, and calligraphy.

Joan-Pau Rubiés is Senior Lecturer in International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is the author of *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India Through European Eyes, 1250–1623* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) and of *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Ashgate, 2007). He also edited, with Jas Elsner, *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (Reaktion Books, 1999). He is currently writing a book entitled *Europe's New Worlds: Travel Writing and the Origins of the Enlightenment 1550–1750*, and editing a collection on Renaissance Methods for Travel, for the Hakluyt Society.

Wes Williams is Fellow and Tutor, St. Edmund Hall, and University Lecturer in French, Oxford University. His main research interests are in the field of Renaissance and early modern literature. He has written a book on pilgrimage writing, *Pilgrimage and Narrative in the French Renaissance: 'The Undiscovered Country'* (Oxford University Press, 1999), continues to explore travel narratives of various kinds across the period, and is now writing a study of monsters and their meanings from, roughly, Rabelais to Racine (by way of Shakespeare, Montaigne and a few others). Williams also works on European film, and (as a translator, writer and director) in contemporary theatre.

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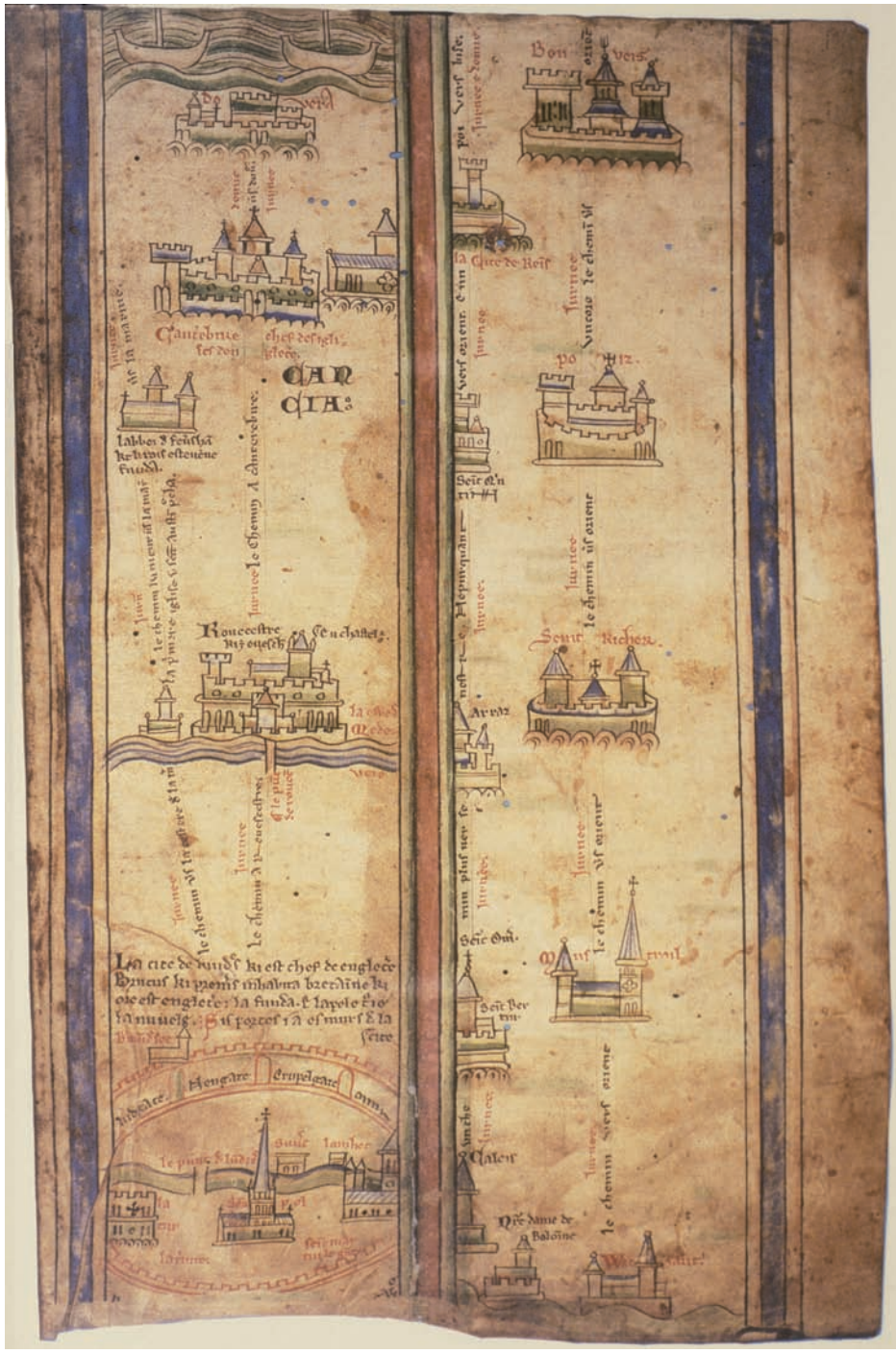

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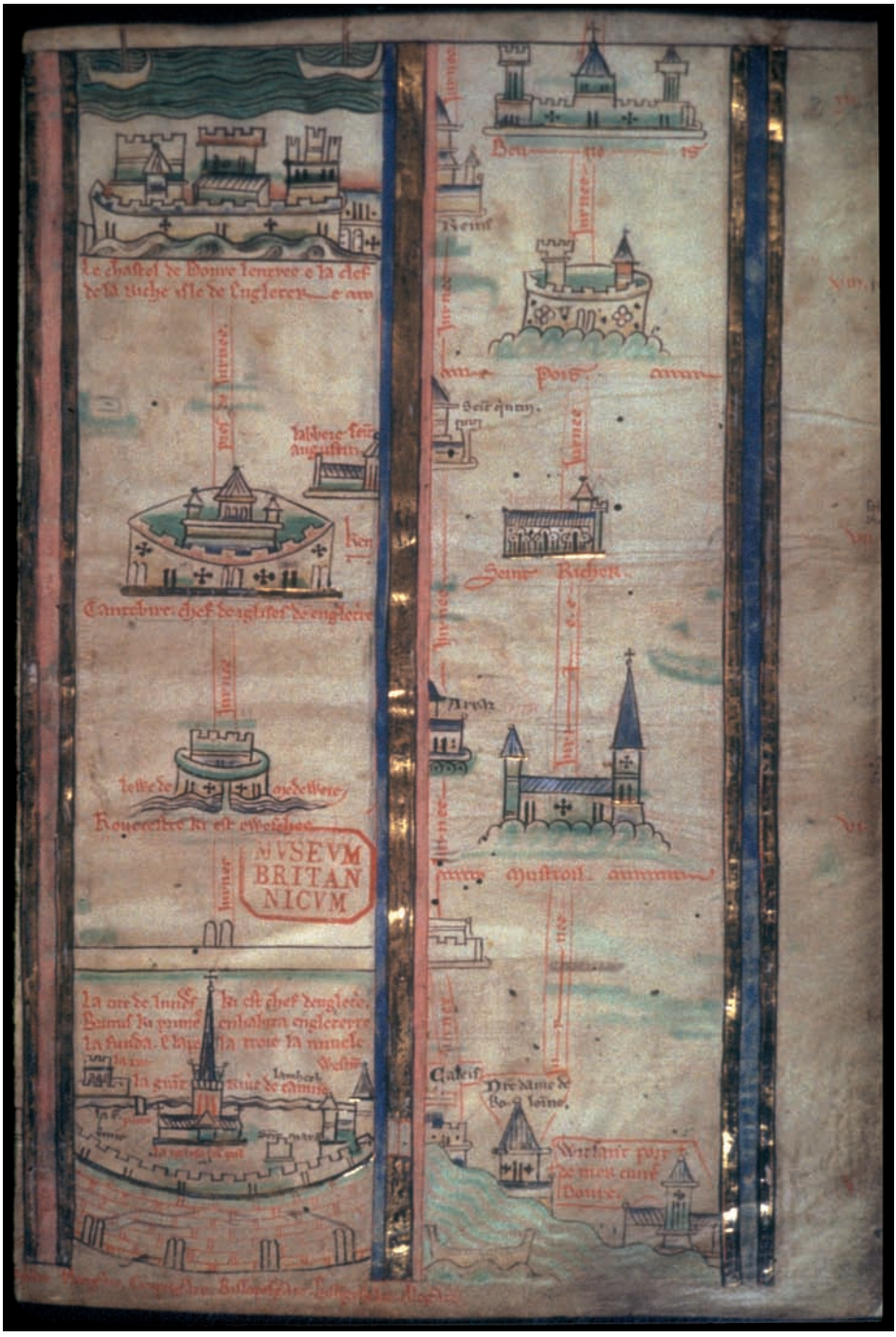

Le chastel de Bouwe lengree e la chef
de la riche isle de Lngleree e am
Cantebire chef de englistef de engleere
Bouwe
Reims
Pois
Seint Richer
Arras
Montroil
Dre dame de
Bo-S loine
Douure
MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

Fig. 4.2, p. 164.

[Plate XII]

Fig. 4.3, p. 166.

TRAPES.
Jherusalem
Le mur Ebel
Gadaune
Rafel
Le chastel
Naples
Ceste cite est la cite de la vaus
Ceste est la cite de labus. Ce est apele en latin fra le gaut: pur ce kele est plenaue
Capue.
Ci est la terre de
pouille.
Hoches.
Ci est la terre de pouille dou la rachine
Florence.
Arefee:
ROM
APVLIA

Fig. 4.4, p. 169.

[Plate XIV]

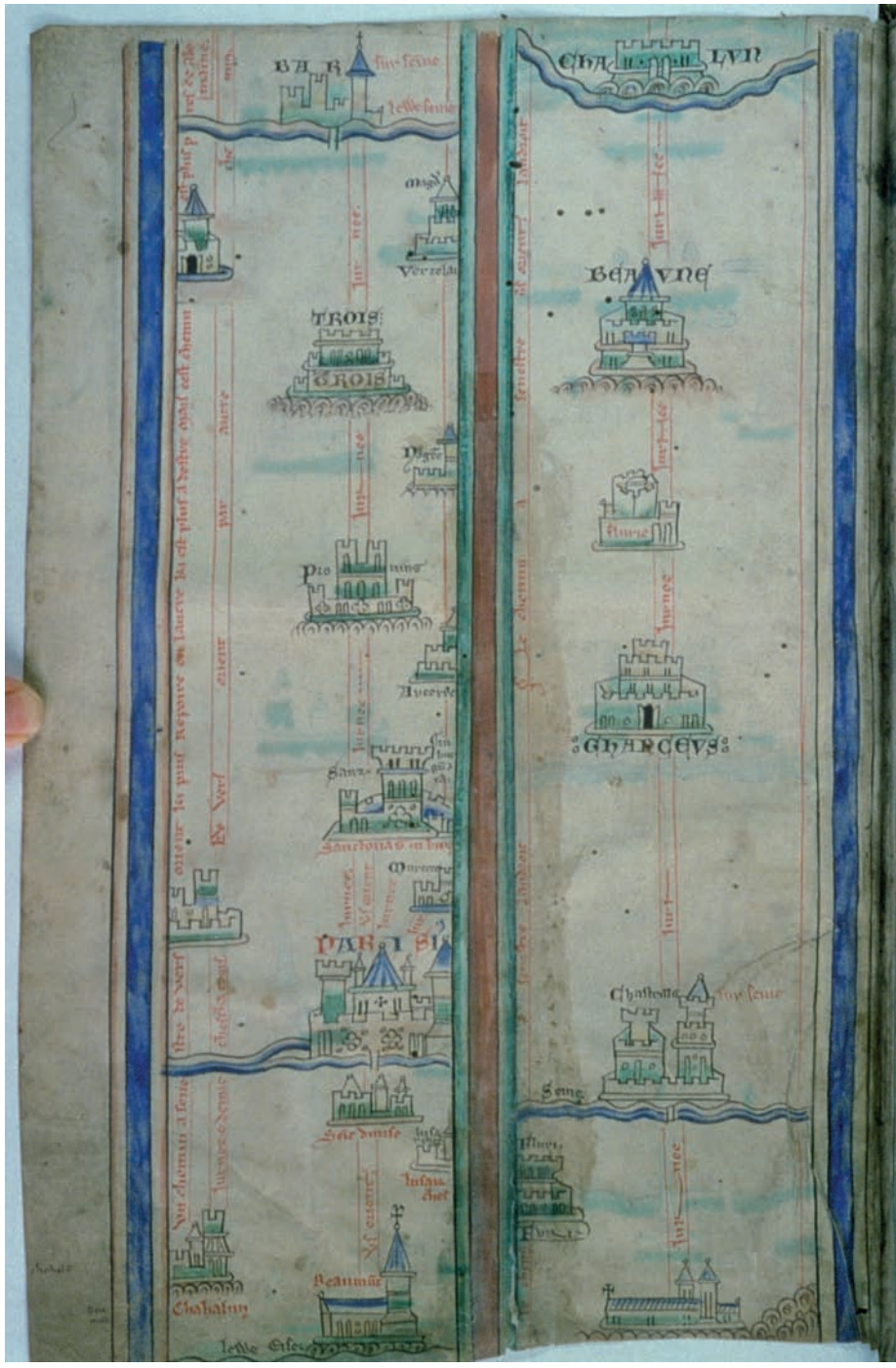


Fig. 4.5, p. 171.

Fig. 4.6, p. 173.

[Plate XVI]

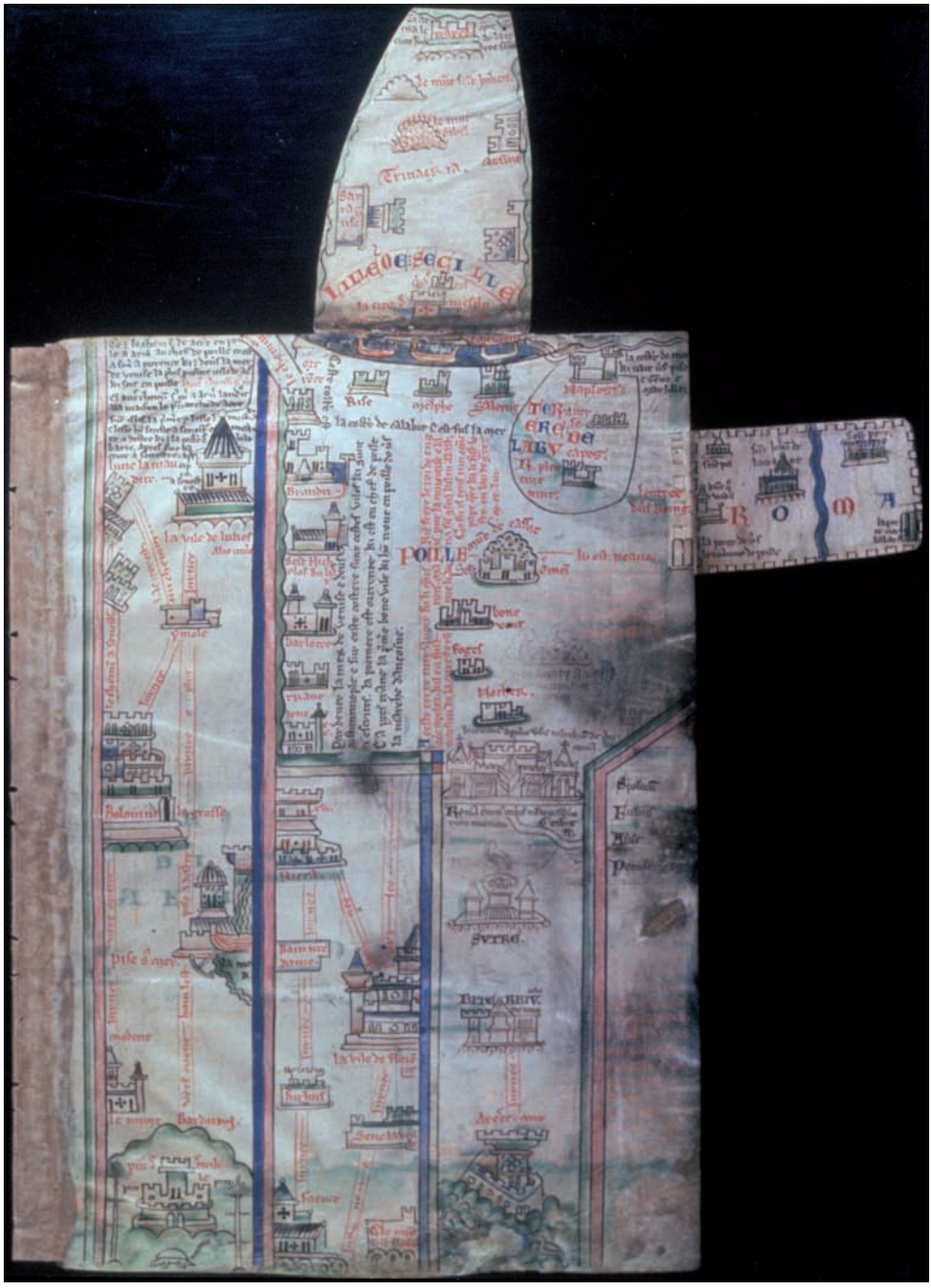


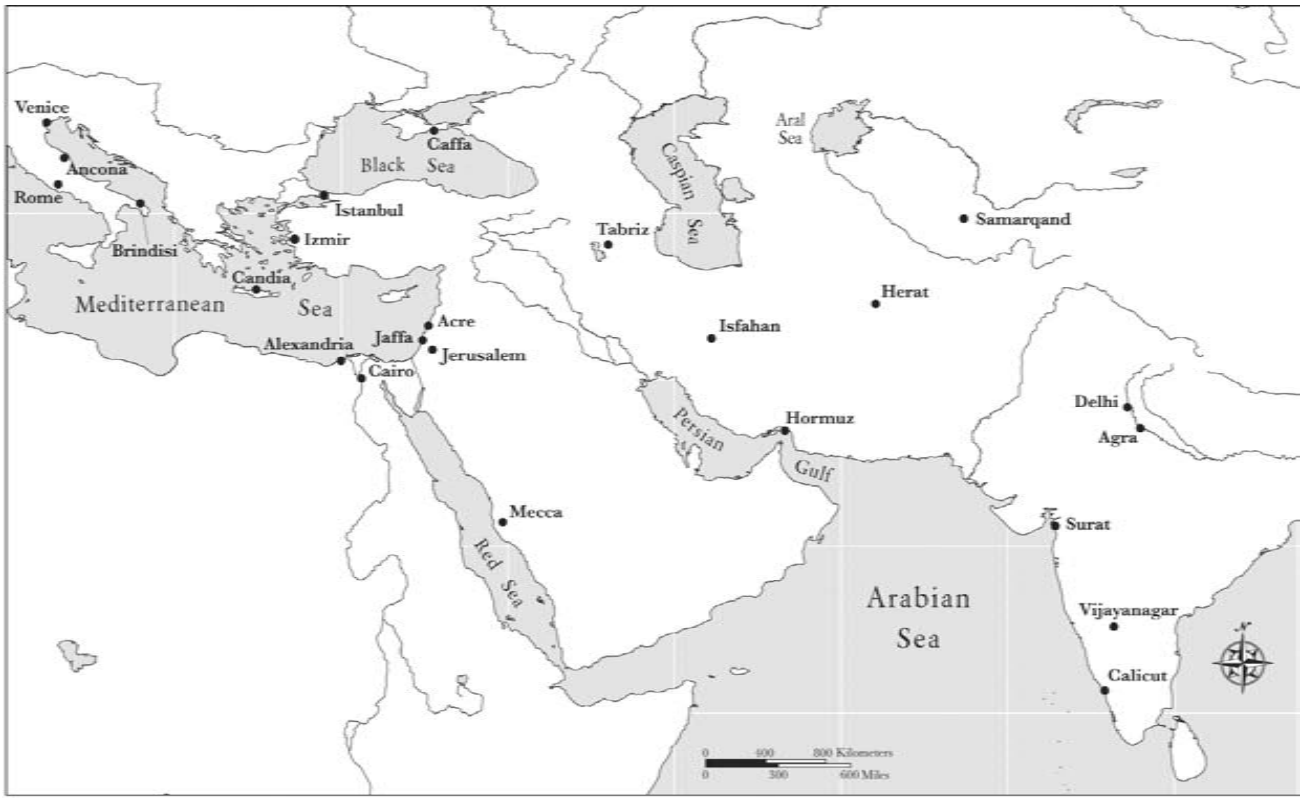
Fig. 4.8, p. 187.

Le chemin de damas a ierusalem
CIVITAS SCRV
Le Kaire
Cheste cite est apelee cire semure. e cire de ymissium. kar nule seignur nat
Cheste cire est la plus digne cire lu sour
Cheste cire est apelee cire semure. e cire de ymissium. kar nule seignur nat
Cheste cire est la plus digne cire lu sour
Cest le chemun
Chastel
Chastel
Chastel

[Plate XVIII]

SCOTIA
CALEDONIA
WALLIA
BRITANNIA
NORTHUMBRIA
CAMBRIA
CORNUBIA
Edinburgh
Carlisle
Durham
York
Chester
Lincoln
Oxford
Canterbury
London
Winchester
Salisbury
Exeter
Bristol
Gloucester
Hereford
Worcester
Coventry
Nottingham
Leicester
Northampton
Cambridge
Norwich
Ely
Peterborough
Lincoln
Hereford
Shrewsbury
Chester
Derby
Stafford
Warwick
Oxford
Reading

SCOCIA: VLTRA MARIA
AVSTER:
WALIA
ORICES
SVEGIA
NORTH HOLLY
DORSET
DEVONIA
CORNUBIA
CANCIA
Burbernelande
Orkade
Gatelwe
Richemid
Duncelm
Ponf Burgi
Ponf fract
Denecaſtr
Bliclfeld
Heuelwere
London
Wellen
Bathonia
Glouma
Bruſtol
Hamtonia
Wincelſe
Cantuarie
Dunelm
Eborac
Lincolia
Cruddle
Wendlesore
Hethamir
Dunefray
Sarefbir
Lewes
Chamer
Wecta
Bathe
Wiltes
Roſſe
Lokee
Bute
Sulhamtun
Exonia
Lundis
Karleola
Karmerdin
Barkamia
Dumbrun
Dunfelin
Edenburg
Roxeburg
Berwic
Bradwey
Bunde
Inſule
Halbeam
Aberbrothoc
Regio paluſtr
Regio ſcotor
Regio Walen
Regio Northanhimbrorum
Regio Merciorum
Regio Eſtanglorum
Regio Eſtſaxonum
Regio Suſſanorum
Regio Occidentalium Saxonum
Regio Cantuariorum
Regio Suthanglorum
Regio Occidentalium Anglorum
Regio Eſtanglorum
Regio Merciorum
Regio Northanhimbrorum
Regio Walen
Regio ſcotor
Regio paluſtr
Pelagus vaſ
Ka
Ka
Ka



Map 1. Destinations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: GENRE, WITNESS, AND TIME IN THE 'BOOK' OF TRAVELS

Palmira Brummett

Intentions

When the MARCO Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at the University of Tennessee planned its 2006 symposium, the organizing committee proposed to focus on travel narratives.[1] Our goal was to examine travel as a mode of narrative and experience, a mode that was not comprised in a simple or single genre called 'travel writing,' but rather one that was expressed in a variety of intersecting genres and a complex matrix of material and rhetorical forms. Much has been written on the art and nature of 'the book.' Where travel narratives are concerned, however, 'the book' itself is comprised in a multiplicity of forms (letters, reports, memoirs, maps) that move from place to place, often reconstituting themselves, as diplomatic reports, oral tales, compendia of knowledge, map legends, or memoirs of places seen and unseen. What is most interesting about the travel narrative may be why, how, when, and whether it becomes a 'book'—a certain type of text for which an audience, often broader than that originally intended, is assumed. Thus, as I sent out the invitations to scholars who worked on travel, I was not sure what form their approaches to the question of a 'book' of travels might take. Similarly, given the notion of 'progress' embedded in the scholarly conception of a linear movement from medieval mythology to early modern science in the crafting by European authors of distant and foreign space, I was not sure how scholars working on the thirteenth or the sixteenth century might characterize their own travel writers in a typology of genre. Would they accept the notion of

[1] Symposium: The 'Book' of Travels: Genre, Itinerary, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage from 1250–1650, University of Tennessee, MARCO Institute, March, 2006.

a late medieval 'break,' or a clear division between 'itinerary' on the one hand, and ethnographic travel narrative on the other? Did 'pilgrimage' of necessity constitute a unique category of travel writing? My own inclination, as an historian of the Ottoman empire (and of travelers to Ottoman space), was to think in terms of a long early modern era, comprising at least the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries, an era for which the continuities in genres of travel writing and mapping were at least as pronounced as the generic breaks. Pilgrimage, for example, a form of travel with the stated intention of appreciating, experiencing, and conveying sacred space, provided one of those continuities. Thus the long early modern era as a concept might be replaced by the notion of the extended medieval, an era which looked to antecedents rather than projecting backward the attributes of the modern, one which added to the 'itinerary' rather than supplanting it. Further, where pilgrimage was concerned, the intention of viewing sacred space was often intertwined in a complex matrix of other intentions—adventure, escape, economic advancement, political gain; and the pilgrimage site was often one destination in a series of destinations—each linked to an evolving set of objectives. Can the 'pilgrimage narrative' be relegated simply to those journeys 'ending' at select destinations, such as Jerusalem or Mecca; or is the designation primarily a characterization of the type of traveler—clergyman and penitent?

I would propose that the term 'ethnology' (the study of the divisions, especially racial, of human-kind, their origins, distribution, relations and characteristics), along with its counterpart 'ethnography' (the systematic recording of human cultures), has been used rather broadly where travel narratives are concerned. 'Ethnology' may express itself in a system of narration developed or promoted in seventeenth century Europe with the aid of 'classical' models for classifying 'race.' It may be represented by the intrusion of ethnographic vignettes into the pages of compendia of knowledge and onto the margins of regional or continental maps. But is it a convention of description employed by travelers defined by specific interests and educations and neglected as irrelevant by others of different inclination or personality? We need to discuss what type of human description is required for the designation 'ethnology' to be applied, and how the perception of scientific 'truth' or accuracy is a factor in that

evaluation.[2] In the historiography of the early modern era, 'ethnology' as a concept may well have been applied more fully and aptly in examining the encounters and narrations of Europeans with Amerindians than in examining those of Europeans with South, Central, or West Asians. And what, after all, constitutes a 'European?' While these questions are hardly novel, my sense is that they have tended to be addressed within certain channels of genre, at the expense of others, and within certain, designated time periods (for example, the 'medieval,' the Renaissance, or the seventeenth century) which mask continuities of representation. We wanted to transcend those channels and that periodization.

Inspired by the time frame selected by Joan-Pau Rubiés for his study of one set of travelers 'East,' the organizing principle for the symposium was thus articulated as follows:

> In his book, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India Through European Eyes, 1250–1625,* Joan-Pau Rubiés addresses the ways that analytical frames for travel narratives, during a period that spans the medieval and early modern eras, do and do not change.[3] He speaks, also, of the analytical languages of Christianity and of civilization, arguing that the main impetus for travel literature was scientific and instrumental (rather than colonial justification), but not "objective and disinterested."[4] "The real alternative is not between objective science and ideological distortion, but rather between different kinds of techniques of knowledge adapted to different kinds of aims and challenges."[5] Taking some of Rubiés ideas as a starting point, this symposium aims to address questions of period and genre across world regional boundaries. What measure of continuity of genre is there, from 1250–1650

[2] See on this question, for example, Bronwen Wilson, "Foggie diverse di vestire de' Turchi: Turkish Costume Illustration and Cultural Translation," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 37, 1 (Winter, 2007): 97–140. Wilson notes that sixteenth and seventeenth century costume manuals combined "curiosity, ethnography, and iconic types (121)." Importantly, she also notes that the "system of visual classification in Western costume books encouraged European viewers to compare themselves with the Ottoman Turks, and the same cognitive processes of discrimination are enlisted in the *Foggie diverse*. For Europeans, this type of manuscript presented an image of the Ottoman court that paralleled their own hierarchies of monarch, officials, soldiers, and staff (130)." For an extended discussion on the implications of ethnography, see the collected essays of Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Travel Writing and Ethnography," in *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 1–39.

[3] Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India Through European Eyes, 1250–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[4] Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, 388.

[5] Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, 391.

> (or beyond) in the book of travels, and what does that continuity tell us about the vision of the world advanced by that society which produced the book? Is the notion of 'itinerary' a predictable narrative core? What do different types of itinerary tell us about the marking of space in early modern and medieval imaginations? How is space counted in terms of campaign, pilgrimage, and ethnology? In what ways does each one demarcate the journey? By what modes were cultural spaces organized, thus making identity and morality possible?[6] What were the cultural familiarities that made communication or understanding across boundaries possible; and how does the author narrate those familiarities? By examining these questions, we propose to enter a dialog with other scholars in an attempt to refine our notions of genre; to question a sense of linear, progressive development from the medieval to the early modern era; and to examine the thematic emphases of travel narratives as they transcend the boundaries of region, state, and culture.

Those objectives guided our discussions during the symposium and shaped our subsequent writings. Certainly the contributions to this volume are not comprehensive; they are meant to join a complex and burgeoning literature on the nature and modes of journeys taken mostly, but not entirely, eastward. But we hope that this combination of essays, which transcends some standard temporal and spatial divisions and which highlights the visual modes of travel narration, provides an intriguing set of intersections of space, personnel, intention, and explication which help illuminate the ways in which the multiple modes of travel narrated and performed in the medieval and early modern periods might be assessed.

Contributors: Genre, Pilgrimage, and Modes of Witness

The essays presented in this volume span the time period from c. 1250 to 1700. The 'books' produced by our narrators range from a set of itinerary maps to diplomatic reports in journal form, from the somewhat boastful adventures of rising civil servants to the somewhat apologetic memoir of an aging, long-term expatriate, and from the poetic to the pedestrian. Some of these books were consciously crafted for publication, others were designed for perusal by a limited number of eyes. Some have been reprinted multiple times, while others have remained relatively obscure—but only relatively, as each

[6] Ibid., 392–3.

has survived to our own times in some accessible form. Regardless of these differences, each travel narrative crafts space in certain formulaic ways, and populates that space, to a greater or lesser degree, with 'foreign' peoples who must at least be dealt with if not understood.[7] The sense of curiosity and wonder regarding these peoples and their cultures may be more or less operable depending on whether it is the site, its rulers, its goods, or its marvels that the traveler/narrator has come to see. Tracing through each of these disparate accounts, however, are certain themes: the experience of witnessing, the stages of travel and visitation, the dangers of (or at least obstacles to) the journey, the ways in which travel challenges paradigms of identity, and the frames of reference available which either facilitate or impede making sense of the foreign encounter. In what follows, I propose to elaborate upon those themes while introducing the essays of the contributors to this volume and commenting upon their ideas. I integrate some additional travel narratives and conclude with a discussion of periodization, typology, 'national' identity, and visuality.

Rubiés: The 'Three Eyes of the World' and the Evaluation of Sovereign Power

Joan-Pau Rubiés' work provided an inspiration for our symposium, and hence his contribution constitutes a centerpiece to this volume. His essay, entitled "Late Medieval Ambassadors and the Practice of Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1250–1450" presents a set of thirteenth through fifteenth century narratives which triangulate Central Asia, Persia, and South Asia, and carry off impressions of that space and its identities to Europe and China. In the process, ethnological hierarchies are created, empires defined, the universals of cross-cultural ritual explored, and ethno-national identities fashioned in light of a complex matrix of goods, rhetorics, styles, faith, and the projection of sovereign power.[8] Rubiés' central character is not a European

[7] I use the word 'foreign' here purposefully despite its negative, modern connotations. It means those peoples and places that are outside of oneself and one's normal or natural place.

[8] For explorations of ethnicity in China in periods later and earlier than that considered by Rubiés, see Pamela Crosley, et al., *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity and Frontier in Early Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); and Marc Abramson, "Deep Eyes and High Noses: Constructing Ethnicity in Tang China (618–907)," 2 vols., Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2001.

moving toward or imagining 'the East.' He is ʿAbd al-Razzaq ibn Ishaq Samarqandi, a Persian traveler who journeys to Vijayanagara (in southern India), in 1442–1444, using that city as a mirror held to his own sovereign's capital of Herat (much as the Hapsburg envoy, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, in the sixteenth century used Istanbul under Ottoman rule as one pole of imperial rule to critique the Hapsburg capital, its administration, and style).[9] ʿAbd al-Razzaq's account is juxtaposed to that of the embassy of Ruy González de Clavijo from the Castilian court of Henry III to the Central Asian court of Timur in Samarqand in 1403. These two narratives are complemented, briefly, by those of: Rabban Sauma (both envoy and pilgrim), a Nestorian monk who traveled west from Tabriz in Persia to various European courts in 1287–1288; and Ch'en Ch'eng, a Chinese traveler to the "far West" of Central Asia, especially Herat, in 1414–1415. All of these authors, taken together, serve as representatives of what Rubiés calls "three late-medieval ethnographic traditions," the Latin Christian, Islamic (Arab and Persian), and Chinese. In each of these narratives, Rubiés is interested in the intersections of empiricism and moral judgment, the evaluation of the concept (and hierarchy) of civilization, and the roles of ethnology and religion in that evaluation. He concludes that in late medieval ambassadorial accounts there was a concept of civilization that could be shared trans-culturally (despite religious difference), based on "the extent of urban prosperity and commerce, the refinement of artistic skills, and the strength and stability of a political authority responsible for security and the administration of justice" (p. 107).

[9] Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq*, ed. and trans., Edward Seymour Forster (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1927, reprinted 2005). On ʿAbd al-Razzaq and travel to South Asia, see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 54–81; note that this text appeared as our volume was going to final edits and was not consulted by our other authors. Alam and Subrahmanyam question, for example, how a youthful traveler like ʿAbd al-Razzaq might have acquired such a high level of detail for his account (73). For another traveler to Southern India in the fifteenth century, whose interactions and observations were further complicated by the fact that he was an Orthodox Christian who adopted Muslim ways (and may have converted to Islam), see Mary Jane Maxwell, "Afanasii Nikitin: An Orthodox Russian's Spiritual Voyage in the Dar al-Islam, 1468–1497," *Journal of World History*, 17, 3 (September, 2006): 243–66. Both ʿAbd al-Razzaq's and Nikitin's accounts problematize the notion that religious belief trumps all other identities in the observation of foreign lands, peoples, and courts.

While Rubiés proposes hierarchies of civility, religious exclusionism, and "secular empiricism" in ambassadorial accounts, he also emphasizes the role of mediations, mediators, and the decoding of courtly "ritual languages" in providing the grounds for cross cultural understandings. Like Williams and Roxburgh, in this volume, he notes the preoccupation of the traveler (in this case ʿAbd al-Razzaq) with certifying his authority through the provision of details and the relation of wonders and peculiar customs to his readers. Those emphases, along with the assumption of the workings of a divine plan, are shared characteristics of Eastern and Western travel accounts which bridge the medieval and the early modern eras, as do admiration for the ideal of justice and preoccupation with the dangers of the journey, both physical and spiritual.[10] Rubiés proposes that later European observers confronted Vijayanagara in ways similar to those described by ʿAbd al-Razzaq, for whom, "Analogies between largely independent language games allowed the traveler to adapt the signs of a symbolic landscape he half understood to the needs of another he wished to manipulate" (p. 76). ʿAbd al-Razzaq's tale also illustrates those staples of the travel narrative which span the period under consideration: the porous borders between reportage and fiction, the invocation of familiar places (mythical, historical, or both at once), the notion of the earthly paradise, the interest in foreign women (and sensual pleasure), the preoccupation with wealth (in its various forms), and the tendency to self-praise by the narrator (whether for his experience, perspicacity, courage, piety, or his ability simply to endure.)[11]

Rubiés begins this treatment of the communication among cultures with a saying, circulated in the Afro-Eurasian realm, and repeated in the narrative of Clavijo's travels. This saying, supposedly originating in China, relates the notion of the 'three eyes of the world,' the idea of an ethno-civilizational hierarchy of knowledge, artistic production, and insight which privileges the two civilizational

[10] "The mere fact that he had survived all dangers and returned after three years is, in his eyes, already remarkable" (68). The characterization of ʿAbd al-Razzaq's account calls to mind the self serving characterization in the sixteenth century voyage to India narrative of the Ottoman Sidi Ali Pasha. See Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 95–120; and Palmira Brummett, "What Sidi Ali Saw," *Portuguese Studies Review*, 9, 1–2 (2002): 232–53.

[11] For a treatment of Christian visions of the earthly paradise, see Alessandro Scafi, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

poles of China and the West ('Cathay' and the 'Franks'). The Chinese, in this construction, have two 'eyes,' the 'Franks' one, and 'the Moors,' (or 'all other nations') are blind men in a third and subordinate position. Rubiés traces this saying through place, time, and narrator, as an illustration of cultural exchange and of an idea of civilizational distinctions. He links it to an era in which the Turco-Mongol invasions and migrations had disrupted the civilizational centers of the Islamic world, an era for which the conquests of Timur had become emblematic.

Rubiés' argument here may be compared to that of John V. Tolan, in his *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*.[12] Tolan also deals with questions of universalism and cross-cultural understanding, directly linking the visions of the early modern to those of the medieval, but arriving at rather different conclusions. Tolan advocates cross-cultural comparison with "depth in time and breadth in space" (something which Rubiés' essay provides), in order to achieve a better understanding of the long history of 'colonial' ideologies. For Tolan, however, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were an era in which an anti-Muslim ideology rooted in the fear of "Islam engulfing the Christian world," was consolidated, even for those observers, who "could have no reasonable fear of Muslim conquest." He proposes that "European denigration of the other is the back side of Christian universalism," an ideology that "crystallized and hardened in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries."[13] Those ideologies may have had something to do with Clavijo's vision of the 'three eyes of the world' in Timur's time as well.

Roxburgh: Clavijo, Timur's Samarqand, and the 'Soft Architecture' of the Timurid Court

The imagining of Timur's (1336–1405) imperial capital did not end with the fifteenth century or with the death of the famous conqueror. 'Tamerlaine,' or any of a variety of incarnations of his name, was

[12] John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

[13] Tolan, *Saracens*, 282–3. Tolan's subjects include polemics regarding Islam from the seventh through the thirteenth centuries, including those of Christian missionaries. See also on the later sixteenth century equation of the Ottoman conquests with earlier Saracen invasions, Constance Relihan, *Cosmographical Glasses: Geographic Discourse, Gender, and Elizabethan Fiction* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2004), 59–60.

immortalized in early modern European poetry and theatre.[14] Clavijo's narrative was reproduced (long after his death) in the sixteenth century, one product of a celebration of Spanish imperial power.[15] The image of the fabulous imperial city, Samarqand, thus remained emblazoned on the early modern European imagination, in part because of its ruler's mystique of wealth and power, but in no small part because Timur had subjugated the Ottoman sultan, placing him in a cage and displaying him as he withdrew in 1402 eastwards across Anatolia.[16] In his 1597 map of "The Turkish Empire," crafted long after Timur's death, Levinus Hulsius depicted Samarqand in the relatively blank space east of a grossly distorted Caspian Sea. The legend next to the city, "Samarchand," reads: "*Tamberlanis magni Tartori imperatoris quondam regia.*"[17] Timur thus remained inscribed on the map, a reminder that 'the Turks' were not necessarily invincible.

The Timurid city itself, and its representation in narrative and visual imagery, is the subject of David Roxburgh's "Ruy González de Clavijo's Narrative of Courtly Life and Ceremony in Timur's Samarqand, 1404." Where Rubiés begins his essay with Clavijo and his repetition of the notion of the 'three eyes of the world,' Roxburgh uses Clavijo's narrative as the centerpiece of his essay, with the contrasting voice of a Persian narrator echoing in the background to

[14] Most notably in Christopher Marlowe's fanciful play *Taburlaine the Great* (1587). For an interpretation of that play see Jonathan Burton, "Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in Tamburlaine," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30, 1 (Winter, 2000): 125–56.

[15] Gonzalo Argote de Molina, *Discurso…sobre el Itinerario de Ruy Gonçalez de Clavijo*, in Ruy González de Clavijo, *Historia del Gran Tamorlan*, Seville, 1582, British Library 814.I.21.

[16] See, on Timur, Beatrice Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). See also Beatrice Manz and David Morgan, eds., *Power, Politics, and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). On Western rhetorical constructions of the encounter between Bayezid and Timur, see Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 108–15, passim; and Walter B. Denny, "Images of Turks and the European Imagination," in *Court and Conquest: Ottoman Origins and the Design for Handel's Tamerlano at the Glimmerglass Opera* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Museum, 1998), 3–18.

[17] Levinus Hulsius, "Turcici Imperii Descriptio," Frankfort a Mayn, 1597, British Library, Maps 43305(.10). Hulsius' map, in turn, echoes the map in Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, 1570, British Library, Maps C.2.c.1, folio 50; also Library of Congress, G 1006 .T5 1570b.

test the false dichotomy between 'literary' and diplomatic sources.[18] Both contributors thus juxtapose European and Persian sources. The reader, however, may want to dispense with the categories of 'East' and 'West' when it comes to characterizing their narratives. The reference points of such travelers' journeys, as will be demonstrated in these essays, are more complex. The Timurid voice in Roxburgh's essay is provided by Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi, court historian to Ibrahim Sultan, son of Shahrukh, son of Timur, in the early fifteenth century. He is the internal traveler, appraising his own city and its ceremonies of sovereign power.

Roxburgh addresses the questions: What does it mean to be an eye-witness? and, What exactly is "seen?" In so doing, he brings the question of genre to the fore, demonstrating that Clavijo's journal and Yazdi's panegyric biography are not necessarily unrelated rhetorical species. Each functions as a book of travels, sharing the experience of wonder and the ambiguity of perceptual recollection. The vision of the eye-witness is uncertain, as are the objects of its scrutiny, embodied here in Timur's constructions of cities and palaces in the form of soft-architecture, structures whose primary material is cloth, but whose appearance mimics that of more permanent edifices.[19] Like ʿAbd al-Razzaq for Vijayanagara, Clavijo had to develop for Samarqand a mental picture for his audience, a language for conveying the nature of the imperial city. But what language does the author employ for that which is irrevocably different from his own experience? Timur does not sit his throne in a palace in a city, but processes through a set of temporary lodgings outside the walls of

[18] For an eloquent treatment of the use of 'literary sources,' cultural scripting, and the problem of equivalence between 'European' and Ottoman sources, see Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 37.

[19] It is interesting to speculate on how this 'soft-architecture' changes paradigms of the gaze and periodization which have been developed for images of 'hard' architecture. See for example, Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 49–50: "In the late sixteenth century modalities of vision changed profoundly. Even though the urban image continued to oscillate between documentation of a historical reality and the exhibition of objects worthy of admiration, chosen according to the criteria of a shared set of values, representational illustrations operated more and more decisively as paradigmatic images that focused and shaped how the city was viewed." Dubbini argues that from this point on it becomes appropriate to speak of "portraits of cities." But how are the portraits altered when the walls are cloth and the cities, at least elements of them, are mobile?

Samarqand, summoning the ambassador now to one pavilionned garden and now to another. Roxburgh is interested to discern the different 'languages,' visual as well as spoken, which visitors were forced to decode, but his approach to that question differs from that of Rubiés by focusing on the visual, minimizing the importance of ethnology, and questioning the possibility of achieving familiarity.

Roxburgh uses the question of mobile palaces to raise another issue, quite pertinent to the analysis of various Turkic polities in the medieval and early modern Eurasian sphere. He writes that the use of tent palaces is neither an "anamnesis of the nomadic practice of seasonal migration" nor emblematic of a Timurid identity crisis, the conqueror suspended unnaturally between nomadic 'roots' and the accoutrements of empire" (p. 155). Rather, as Roxburgh notes, Timur in his extra-urban tented gardens was "consciously manipulating discrete cultural traditions for his own ends" (p. 155). That assertion defies one of the enduring caricatures of the Turkic polity, whether Timurid or Ottoman, that is that it managed to remain a 'nomadic' military entity while creating empire and inhabiting highly civilized capitals. Sixteenth and seventeenth century miniatures of Ottoman campaigns or entertainments replicate the layers of soft-architecture, with their silken enclosures and screened windows, described in the journal of Clavijo's visit to Samarqand.[20] But, no matter their number, those tents and their horse-tail standards do not signify a nomadic entity. As with Timur's tents, they signify a conscious strategy of identity, hierarchical relationships, and rule.

That strategy is apparent in other narrations of the early modern tent-court. Another Western traveler, the Venetian Michele Membré, during his 1539–1542 sojourn to Iran, was also duly impressed by the elaborate, mobile, tent-court of the Safavid Shah, Tahmasp (r. 1524–1576). Membré says that "according to what I was able to count with my own eyes," the shah seemed to have 5,000 tents.[21] Like the 'palaces' invoked by Clavijo, Membré describes a group of pavilions set off from the surrounding encampment by a thick cord punctuated with support poles:

[20] For a wonderful and in-depth assessment of the Ottoman tent complex, its use and display, see Nurhan Atasoy, *Otağ-ı Hümayun: The Ottoman Imperial Tent Complex* (Istanbul: Aygaz, 2000).

[21] Michele Membré, *Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia (1539–1542)*, ed. and trans., A.H. Morton (Warminster, Wiltshire: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1999), 18.

> This palace has three pavilions, one behind the other, and the second pavilion is very large. There, within, stands the utāq [large tent/pavilion] which is made of sticks of gilded wood in the form of a dome and covered over with scarlet. Upon the cloth is foliage, cut out and sewn with silk. Within, on the ground there was a red felt, lined with a kind of woolen canvas, and over the said felt there were very fine carpets of silk, on which appeared figures of many animals and foliage. In the third of the tents in the audience palace he sleeps when it is not cold. And after the third tent is his privy, of a kind of cloth with sticks, which form a long room…. And outside the King's court is his kitchen, and from there the other tents of his supplies; and next stand the tents of the most beloved of the Lords… in such a way that there were tents as far as a man could see, all well-ordered with their streets.[22]

In and around this palace court, audiences and feasts were held, justice rendered, social hierarchies illustrated, goods created, and diplomats received. Membré, like Clavijo, stood as witness to this dazzling and orderly array of 'soft architecture' which served not only to create a city and a palace, but to craft an impressive (and sometimes confusing) display of the ruler's wealth and power for the visiting diplomat.

Connolly: The Virtual Pilgrim and the Monastic and Royal Itineraries

The medieval 'witnessing' of 'the East' took various forms, mixing or layering genres, and confounding the distinctions between image and text, narrative and map.[23] In "Copying Maps by Matthew Paris: Itineraries Fit for a King," Daniel Connolly shifts the focus from ambassadorial travel to pilgrim narrative. He presents the envisioning of sacred space by a pilgrim who stayed at home, in the Benedictine abbey of St. Albans in England. Matthew Paris, around 1250, produced a set of itinerary maps to preface his *Chronica Majora*, a history of the world, creation, and the ages of man. What role does the depiction of travel serve in such a context? While 'accuracy' and

[22] Membré, *Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia,* 19–20, also 24, 39–40, 43, on the mobile court. This is only one segment of his long description of the imperial tent complex.

[23] Indeed the mixing and layering of genres was typical of medieval and early modern maps. While maps have been analyzed in terms of a scientific, evolutionary paradigm for the period under consideration, we see in fact that early modern map makers picked and chose the elements of modernity and the elements of history used to characterize geographic space; available technologies of measurement were only one factor among many (e.g., available plates, rhetorical objectives, 'classical' pasts) used to craft space.

the 'eye-witness' had certainly not been dispensed with as categories of knowledge, the objective of such a history and its illustrations transcends (or is even impeded by) experience.[24] The 'Monastic version' of Paris' itinerary worked to "coordinate the geography of the world" with the Divine Plan and to allow its readers to retrace "the movements of Christian history" (p. 174).

Connolly also explores the ways in which Paris' maps physically and visually conveyed the experience of a sojourn to Jerusalem to his readers, while allowing them the freedom of effortless time and cosmological travel.[25] These pilgrims-at-a-distance escaped the trials and exigencies of physical travel while enjoying the step-by-step (day-by-day) pace of an itinerary, the accompanying lessons on Christian and imperial history, and the emotional impact of encountering sacred sites. Paris' itineraries suggest that there were a variety of ways in which one could enter into sacred space (physically, intellectually, mystically); and Connolly explores the image-text configurations that made a more physical approach to the Holy Land possible through the manipulation (with body, hand, and eye) of mapped space by those who remained at home.[26] The traveler moved through the itinerary maps, mimicking (more or less) the movement of a pilgrim who directly encountered the land and sea spaces separating London

[24] As Blake Leyerle notes in, "Landscape as Cartography in Early Christian Pilgrimage Narratives," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 64, 1 (Spring, 1996): 119–43, for earlier Christian pilgrims, what is crucial is that the "places where sacred history happened" (128), are seen and connected to that sacred history. Details do not suggest 'accuracy,' and both terrain and people may function primarily as symbols. Often, there is no interest per se in the "landscape" (137).

[25] For a variety of map treatments of this Abrahamic sacred space, see Ariel Tishby, ed., *Holy Land in Maps* (New York and Jerusalem: Rizzoli and the Israel Museum, 2001). For a brief bibliography on medieval English pilgrimage, see Christian Zacher, "Travel and Geographical Writings," in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500*, v. 7, pt. XIX, ed., Albert Hartung (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1986), 2449–66. And for virtual travel to Rome, one of Paris' Christian capitals, in the sixteenth century, see Rebecca Zorach, ed., *The Virtual Tourist in Renaissance Rome: Printing and Distributing the Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[26] For some other interesting treatments of the image-text juxtaposition in the time period covered in this volume, see David Roxburgh, *Persian Album 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); and Emine Fetvacı, "Viziers to Eunuchs: Transitions in Ottoman Manuscript Patronage, 1566–1617," Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, Department of History of Art and Architecture, 2005, e.g., 318–19.

and Jerusalem.[27] He felt the cathartic sense of relief and arrival as the journey culminated in the landing on the coast of Palestine. Unlike the travelers described elsewhere in this volume in Wes Williams' essay on seventeenth century pilgrimage, there was no immediate risk to life and limb attached to the act of witnessing engaged in by Paris' readers. Nonetheless, the itinerary maps provided a type of physical engagement, while the visual pilgrimage served to ward off the ravages of sin and facilitate a meditation on the apocalypse.

Paris' itineraries transcend the boundaries between image and text, narrative and map. Whether one sees the images as a natural extension of the text (often the case in medieval and early modern mapping) or sees the image as text (to be read, followed, and performed) both image and text are a visualization of pilgrimage. That visualization is religiously significant almost regardless of audience. But Connolly also examines the sovereign contexts and systems of patronage that may have influenced the production of Paris' itinerary and the textual variants (e.g., the 'Royal version') that emerged from it over time. If it were, in fact, the king's hand that would page eastward through the maps, the king's eye that would fall upon the city of Jerusalem, then geography could be amended and the intersections between earthly and heavenly kingdoms could be exploited rhetorically for political ends. Paris and his monastery could provide that opportunity for comparison (the approximation of the British

[27] Rome and Constantinople were the important, intervening imperial cities, crucial antecedents in the telling of Christian history. But because Paris' itinerary map took the pilgrim by boat from the Italian shore, Constantinople was not directly included in the journey. Of course Jerusalem was also a site for Muslim pilgrimage, the pilgrims proceeding along different routes. For one example of a medieval Persian itinerary and description of the city, along with the hajj to Mecca, see W.M. Thackston, ed. and trans., *Nāser-e Khosraw's Book of Travels (Safarnāma)*, Persian Heritage Series 36 (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1986). Khosraw is more interested in describing buildings than people, but he does note bits of history and conventional wisdom. He writes of the "Valley of Gehenna" at Jerusalem, "The common people say that anyone who goes to the edge of the valley can hear the voices of the people in hell. I went there but heard nothing" (22). Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans 1517–1683* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994), 3–4, has noted the social significance of the pilgrimage of the mind to Muslim communities, that is the pilgrimage for those who did not go. On the hajj to Mecca and its construction in travel writings, see F.E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); and Michael Wolfe, ed. and intro., *One Thousand Roads to Mecca: Ten Centuries of Travelers Writing about the Muslim Pilgrimage* (New York: Grove Press, 1997).

king's rule to that of Alexander, or even that of Jesus Christ) and perhaps secure substantive material support in return.

After all, maps and sets of maps composing itineraries were meant to show the way, to guide the imagination, to enhance the possibilities for salvation, and to reveal the identities of those who would and would not have access to heaven. Matthew Paris' map, as Connolly illustrates, shows the pilgrim ship departing from Brindisi on the Italian shore; when the reader turns the map's flap, the boat reappears at its destination in the Levant. Three centuries later, in 1546, Giacomo Gastaldi, a famous Venetian mapmaker, produced a map image that reverses the direction of the pilgrim vessel shown in Paris' map sailing ultimately (even miraculously) to find safe harbor in the Holy Land.[28] In Gastaldi's map of the Balkans the 'ship of faith' is depicted heading west, away from the lands occupied and threatened by Muslim kings. Thus, he draws, in the Adriatic Sea sailing toward the Italian shore, a small boat with two rowers and one steersman. Standing in the bow is a figure that appears to represent Jesus of Nazareth. A halo encircles his head and in his hand he holds a chalice. A large cross occupies the center of the boat held by another figure with halo and chalice. The boat is marked with the label "*Fede*." The ship of faith in this image has thus been launched from the Dalmatian shore, a contested space in the mid-sixteenth century, but one which was dominated by the Ottoman empire. Moving west in the Adriatic, it suggests a connection between the Christian populations of the Balkans and those of the Italian peninsula, a connection embodied in the cross, a standard marker on early modern maps of Christian space and the claims of Christian monarchs. Unlike the audience for Paris' maps, the audience for Gastaldi's maps was much closer to the borders of

[28] Giacomo Gastaldi, "La vera descrittione di tutta la Ungheria, Transilvania, Valachia ….," Venice, 1546; see in Mithad Kozličić, *Atlas Kartografski Spomenici Hrvatskoga Jadrana*, Series Monumenta Cartographica Maris Adriatici Croatici (Zagreb: AGM, 1995), 115; and Leo Bagrow, *History of Cartography*, revised by R.A. Skelton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), plate LXVII. According to Robert Karrow, *Mapmakers of the Sixteenth Century and Their Maps* (Chicago: Speculum Orbis Press for the Newberry Library, 1993), 219–20, the only known copy of this woodcut map, in four sheets, is at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Note that the map was printed by Matteo Pagan whose shop was at the "*segna della Fede*," so this ship is also an emblem of the publisher who sometimes used an angel with a cross as an emblem of his work.

Christendom (both imagined and real).[29] Yet it was an audience composed overwhelmingly of those, who, like Paris' readers, would only experience the sacred sites of their faith at a distance. Both audiences, one in the thirteenth century and one in the sixteenth, believed in the ship of faith. The ship on Gastaldi's map sailed away from lands historically labeled as Christian space, his audience thereby reminded that those lands were in need of redemption. Paris' ship sailed toward lands governed by Muslim rulers. But his audience viewed Jerusalem as eternally Christian, a space that transcended time, mirrored the heavenly city, and stood as the most compelling destination for the aspiring or imagined pilgrim.

In the seventeenth century that notion of timeless Christian space still survived (as it does today). Thus, Thomas Fuller, an English Protestant scholar, in his *Historie of the Holy Warre*, saw the struggle to redeem Jerusalem as extending back to the eleventh century and forward to his own time, 1639, and beyond.

> …Thus Jerusalem after it had fourescore and eight yeares been enjoyed by the Christians, by Gods just judgment was taken agin by the Turks. What else could be expected? Sinne reigned in every corner; there was scarce one honest woman in the whole city of Jerusalem. Heraclius the Patriarchk, with the Clergie, was desperately vitious: and no wonder if iron rust when gold doth; and if the Laity followed their bad example.
>
> This doleful news brought into Europe, filled all with sighs and sorrows. Pope Urbane the third (as another Eli at the Arks captivity) died of grief…[30]

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[29] The borders between Ottoman sovereign space and that of Christian kings were neither simple nor contiguous; and they were based on routes and fortresses rather than lines or blocks of sovereign space. On these borders, see for example: Colin Heywood, "The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths," in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands 700–1700*, eds., Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 228–50; Colin Imber, Keiko Kiyotake, and Rhoads Murphey, *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province, and the West*, v. 2 (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2005); Palmira Brummett, "Imagining the Early Modern Ottoman Space from World History to Piri Reis," in *The Early Modern Ottoman Empire: Remapping the Empire*, eds., Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15–58; Géza Pálffy, "The Origins and Development of the Border Defense System Against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (Up to the Early Eighteenth Century)," in *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, eds., Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 3–70.

[30] Thomas Fuller, *Historie of the Holy Warre* (Cambridge: Thomas Buck, 1639), 106–7, Book II, Folger Shakespeare Library, 11464, copy 2.

For Fuller, the redemption of the Holy Land required prayer and the redemption of sinners. The 'Church' of Europe was inextricably tied to Palestine by history, by the hopes of the believers, and by a parade of pilgrims who endured hardship and death, as well as the sorrow of knowing that Jerusalem, four centuries after Paris crafted his maps, remained in the hands of the infidel. While Jerusalem was far away and unattainable for most of Fuller's (and Paris') readers, it was also, quite literally, near to hand, made so by books, maps, memory, and the insistent commemoration of (lost) possession.

Williams: The Traveler's Voice and Renaissance Pilgrimage Narratives

Wes Williams, in his essay, " 'A mirrour of mis-haps,/ A Mappe of Miserie': Dangers, Strangers, and Friends in Renaissance Pilgrimage," looks at pilgrimage narratives produced in a somewhat earlier era than that in which Fuller was writing. Williams confronts the question of genre directly in his assessment of the pilgrim, his experience, and the rhetorics of travel.

> From early to late Renaissance, European travelers on the one hand, and stay-at-homes on the other were working from beyond and within the territory of pilgrimage, the better to extend its generic limits and bounds and to argue from differing perspectives that theirs was the true and proper understanding of pilgrim terms. (p. 210)

Like Connolly, Williams is concerned with the body's encounter with pilgrimage, not through the tactile and visual manipulation of a text, but through direct experience of the "Joyes and Miseries of Peregrination," as suggested in a 1618 volume of verse published in Edinburgh on the pilgrimage of the Scottish traveler, William Lithgow (1582–1645).[31] The audience for travel narratives is apparent here, as is the manipulation, through standard tropes and inventive designations (in poetry and prose), of that audience. Williams approaches his topic through Lithgow's poetic dialog between the 'Muse' and the 'Pilgrime,' one characterizing travel as pain and danger, the other justifying travel for its beneficial and edifying effects.

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[31] On Lithgow, see Edmund Bosworth, *William Lithgow of Lanark's Travel in the Ottoman Lands, North Africa and Central Europe (1609–21)* (London: Ashgate, 2006). See also, Kenneth Parker, ed., *Early Modern Tales of Orient: A Critical Anthology* (London: Routledge, 1999), 149–74; William H. Sherman, "Stirrings and Searchings (1500–1720)," in *A Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, eds., Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 17–36.

He argues that the relative value of experiencing sacred sites, as opposed to hearing or reading attentively about them (as Matthew Paris did), remained the subject of significant debate in early modern Europe from the early 1530s through the early seventeenth century. This era saw the continuation and elaboration of texts which enabled the practice of imagined journeys to the Holy Land, collapsing time and space and placing the arm-chair traveler in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth (or Saint Paul, or other pilgrims). 'True eye-sight' in the dialog of Muse and Pilgrime is at issue and creates a hierarchy of pilgrims, just as the 'three eyes' in Rubiés' essay embody an ethno-religious hierarchy of knowledge and insight that divides those who understand from those who do not. In Lithgow's dialog, the eye-witness triumphs over those who merely look at second-hand, but his triumph is qualified. For those who sought out the actual experience of the journey, fear and suffering were their natural and inescapable companions, burdens which were relieved, but not lifted, by another companion, human friendship, as an ameliorating force.

Williams looks at the narratives of pilgrimage by travelers such as Denis Possot, in 1532, Antoine Regnaut, in 1549, and Lithgow, to examine the "grammar of testimony" whereby their experiences were communicated—in how personal a voice, and in what terms.[32] Do the narrators see themselves as individuals, as exemplars, or as members of a class of those performing the pilgrimage and the faith? Were they in the habit of writing, or does the pilgrimage provide the opportunity for an extraordinary act of narration and visualization, producing "singular forms of subjectivity" (p. 219)? How conscious were they of narrative antecedents? Williams argues that the grammar of testimony changes as the sixteenth century turns into the seventeenth and as the Counter-Reformation makes it imperative to "define the subjectivity of the true Christian pilgrim" (p. 224). He presents Montaigne's critique of the new subjectivity, and his desire for topographers rather than "vagabonds" to lend "narrative decorum" to the practice of travel writing" (p. 226). Distinctions

[32] For further commentary on and itineraries of such travelers see: Stephane Yerasimos, *Les Voyageurs dans l'empire ottoman (XIVe–XVIe siècles): bibliographie, itinéraires et inventaire des lieux habités* (Ankara: Société Turque d'Histoire, 1991); Clarence Dana Rouillard, *The Turk in French History, Thought, and Literature (1520–1660)* (Paris: Boivin, [1941]); Carl Göllner, *Turcica: Die europäischen Türkendrucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols. (Berlin and Bucharest: Akademie Verlag and Editura Academiei, 1961–1978).

between the two, and between secular and sacred travel, are explored in the 1604 *Guide and handbook for those wishing to undertake the Holy Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, written by the priest Henri de Castela. As does Paris in a more limited sense, Castela lays claim to Jerusalem and to the ways it must be experienced. The pilgrim must be neither too curious nor too practically minded; he must seek like minded companions and not consort with the locals in the Holy Land. Williams concludes with the 1603 travel account of the British merchant, Henry Timberlake, which 'discourse' emphasizes the themes of danger and companionship. His companions, one English Protestant, the other Arab Muslim, serve as bulwarks between Timberlake and the trials and tribulations of the journey, each in his own way trying to 'save' the traveler from the depredations of those foreign peoples who rule and manage the Holy Land. The traveler is in need of protection from the Ottoman overlords ('Turks') and Timberlake delineates the various forms that protection might take, from Muslim 'guides' to 'popish' monasteries, to the unheeded advice of his more experienced traveling companion.

Of course the propriety and modes of telling the journey to Jerusalem were contested throughout the period with which this volume is concerned. Regardless of approach, however, books of Western pilgrim travels tended to repeat elements of a composite history of Jerusalem which linked the Turco-Mongol invasions of the tenth through thirteenth centuries to the Ottoman conquests of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with the Mamluks of Egypt and Syria standing in, as hegemons of Jerusalem, between one plague of 'Turks' and the other. The sacred center of Christendom, Jerusalem, was thus characterized as a long beleaguered place, reached only with considerable danger and trepidation, as well as with joy and anticipation. And the prospective traveler did well to read his histories before he departed.

Andre Favyn, a contemporary of both Lithgow and Timberlake, published a volume on knighthood and the "Historie of the whole Christian World" in Paris in 1620 which was swiftly translated and republished in English. The English dedication (signed "W.I.," presumably William Iaggard who is listed as the English publisher) begins:

> Anacharsis the wise Philosopher …. writing to Croesus the rich King of Lydia, concerning the Maiestie of Historie and Chronologie, wherein the Grecians excelled all other Nations, used the Words Historie,

> and Chronologie, in their essentiall understanding; [They] Are the Treasure of passed occasions; the patterne of such as are to suceed; the Picture of Mans Life; the Touchstone of our actions; the effecter of our Honor. And as Cicero (ioyning in iudgement with him) ffirmeth: That they are the Testimony of Times; the Light of Trueth; the Life of Memorie; the Mistresse of Life, and the Messenger of Venerable Antiquitie.
>
> The reading of Chronicles and Authenticke Histories, doe give us an instant sight of such things, as Millions of men have tried with losse of their Lives, Goods, and Honour; being made wisely perspicuous by their perill, ….[33]

Iaggard here subscribes to the early modern European convention of invoking the authorities of what served as the 'classical' (Greek and Roman) past, at least for certain educated European readers. He links the genre of travel literature inextricably to the genre of history, both revealing the nature of far-off places and the dangers that men must circumvent. Those dangers came in the form of Muslim conquest, within which broad frame the pains and nuisances recorded by travelers such as Lithgow, Possot, and Timberlake were made manifest. The wise reader or prospective traveler would seek the "instant sight" provided by such narratives and histories to help ward off the dangers of the journey.

Favyn's text links the medieval Ayyubid conquest of Jerusalem to the early modern Ottoman one in 1516, collapsing history. He records Saladin's (Salah al-Dīn, d. 1193) conquest and provides a list of the "Kings of Jerusalem," culminating in the contemporary Ottoman sultans. These latter were rulers who, according to Favyn, revered tax revenues more than they revered the Holy City. But at least that avarice ensured the access of Christian pilgrims to the sacred sites:

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[33] Andre, Favyn, *The Theater of Honor and Knight-Hood or A Compendious Chronicle and Historie of the whole Christian World Containing The originall of all Monarchies, Kingdomes, and Estates, with their Emperours, Kings, Princes, and Governours, Their Beginnings, Continuance, and Successions, to this present Time. The First Institution of Armes, Emblazons, Kings, Heralds, and Pursuivants of Armes: With all the Ancient and Moderne Military Orders of Knight-hood in every Kingdome. Of Duelloes or Single Combates, with the Origianll, Lawes, and Observations. Likewise of Ioustes, Tourneys, and Tournaments, and Orders belonging to them. Lastly of Funerall Pompe, for Emperours, Kings, Princes, and meaner Persons, with all the rites and Ceremonies fitting for them*. Written in French, by Andrew Favine, Parisian: and Advocate in the High Court of parliament, M.D.C.XX., London: William Iaggard, 1623, Folger Shakespeare Library, 10717, copy 1, English dedication, unnumbered pages.

> …By this surpriz [Saladin's conquest] all of the holy City, the Kingdome of Ierusalem ceased, and tooke ending, when it had beene held by the Latine Christians fourescore and eight yeares. and the descendants of Saladine, Sultanes of Aegypt, held it three hundred and thirty years; when the Great turke Selim (growing mightie in Armes) conquered [in 1516] from the Sultanes of Aegypt the City of Ierusalem, which the Turkes (in the Arabian language) call Codsoarich, and by an other name cuzumobarech, which signifieth A Holy Cittie, and which they left in such estate, as they conquered it from the Mammelukes: not in regard of any devotion, but for the great taxations and tributes, which they had by Christian Pilgrimes, to whom for benefite they granted accesse and entrance.[34]

The Ottoman Turks, in many such sources equated with the medieval Scythians, serve then as descendants of Saladin once removed, another Muslim polity that deprived Jerusalem of its proper status and its Christian pilgrims (like those described in Williams' essay) of the security and comforts they might desire. Falling at the hands of "the Angel, Turk, and Death; heaven, earth, and hell," as Thomas Fuller illustrated in the frontispiece of his 1639 *Historie of the Holy Warre*, was an anticipated outcome for those (soldier or pilgrim) who ventured forth out of Europe, in the name of the Christian god, bound for the city of Jerusalem (Fig. 1.1).[35]

Banerjee: Constructing the Harem and Identity in 'Postcards from the Edge'

Wes Williams' essay ends with a brief and provocative meditation on gender. "What," he asks, "is meant by the silence and absence of women in published Renaissance pilgrimage narratives?" (p. 238). We leave that question to our readers; it is beyond the scope of this volume. Yet, while there may be a shortage of published narratives by Renaissance female pilgrims, women are clearly not absent in the narratives treated by Rubiés, Roxburgh, and Pompa Banerjee. For 'Abd al-Razzaq, the fabulous brothels of Vijayanagara are evidence of sound government; and for Clavijo, Timur's wives are his hosts, direct and highly visible representatives of the exercise and spectacle of sovereign power. Indeed, if one is to speak of travel narratives, as opposed to the pilgrimage narratives employed in Williams' essay,

[34] Favyn, *The Theatre of Honor*, 355. "Codsoarich" is presumably "Kuds-i Şerif" in Turkish and "cuzumobarech" an expression of the Arabic Quds Mubarak (blessed Quds).

[35] Fuller, "A Declaration of the Frontispiece," located before title page.

THE HISTORIE
of the
HOLY WARRE.
By Tho Fuller, B.D. Prebendarie
of Sarum, late of Sidney-Coll.
in Cambridge.
John. 4. 21.
The houre cometh when ye shall neither in
this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem
worship the Father.
Act. 5. 38.
If this counsel be of men it will
come to nought.
CROWND WITH THORNS. + NO CROWN OF GOLD WHERE CHRIST WAS
THIS BLACK SHIELD ALL SALADINE CONQUEROR OF THE EAST LAIN TO HIS GRAVE
We went out
full
EU=ROPE.
But return
empty
Peregrinatio pauca, retrorsum.
Peter the Hermite
The Temple of the Sepulchre.
Printed by Thomas Buck one of the Printers to the Universitie of Cambridge. & are sold by John Williams at ye Crane in St. P. Church-yard.

Fig. 1.1. Thomas Fuller, *The Historie of the Holy Warre*, [Cambridge]: Thomas Buck, 1639, frontispiece. Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 11464, copy 1. Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.

one could say that women (whether silent or not) were of great concern to the travelers who journeyed eastwards out of Europe as well as to internal Asian travelers like 'Abd al-Razzaq. Travel narratives often mark space, and the transitions from one ethno-linguistic frontier to another, by means of commentary on women's roles, dress, beauty (or lack thereof), manners, and transgressions. Granted, the narrators are not women (as is the case throughout the essays in this volume); these are male tellings. Women are, to a greater or lesser degree, subjects of the male narrators' tales. Their role as subjects, their transformation under the gaze of the European witnesses, and the question of narrative subjectivity in general (as for Williams) play a crucial role in Pompa Banerjee's essay, "Postcards from the Harem: The Cultural Translation of Niccolao Manucci's *Book of Travels*." For Banerjee, gender (its borders and its spaces—male and female) is a central element in the assessment of the travel experience and in the narration of foreign space.[36]

Banerjee begins her essay with a question, "What is the position of a European narrator in an eastern harem?" (p. 241). What indeed? The word 'position,' here, suggests multiple possibilities: allocated space, identity, authority, relative power, and a matrix of relationships, including sexual relationships, not to mention the rhetorical construction of self for an audience. Banerjee addresses all of these options, focusing on the travel book of Niccolao Manucci, a Venetian traveler who spent more than fifty years (1653–1709) in India, mastering elements of South Asian language and adopting official roles within Indian courts. The 'harem' in Banerjee's title serves to highlight the question of the seen and unseen—a question which traces through the various contributions to this volume—but 'harem' here is not limited to the notion of male travelers peeping at 'Oriental'

[36] Of course 'gender' is not synonymous with female, although many gender studies are frequently tipped in that direction. For an interesting examination of gender, travel writing, and fiction, see Relihan, *Cosmographical Glasses*, xii, who has argued that, "for the texts I study, gender difference and geographical difference are inseparable." Relihan's work is relevant to the concerns in this volume for its assumption that early modern ethnographers inherited their "discourse" of place from "the medieval world" (xii), for its use of the frame of fear of "turning Turk" in the assessment of early modern ethnographic texts, and for its assumption of a "developing sense of national identities," in late sixteenth century Europe (45, and passim).

women.[37] Rather, the harem space which Manucci 'experiences' has broad implications for the crafting of socio-sexual, ethnic, and political identities, both male and female.[38]

Manucci is neither envoy nor pilgrim (although one might characterize the harem narrative as a type of pilgrimage story—a journey into sacred space that is, by its very nature, temporary and puzzling). He is a particularly appealing traveler, in part because he is not traveling so much as staying still for a long period of time, and in part because of his "tortured ruminations on his personhood, national affiliation, and linguistic uncertainty" (p. 243). Thus he is neither the stiff-necked European traveler who applies his fixed categories of identity and hierarchy to an already homogenized 'Orient,' nor the open minded and curious traveler who journeys East to see where visions of the 'Orient' might lead him.[39] Running away at the age of fourteen, Manucci was thrust into a series of foreign spaces to which he had no choice but to adjust. And adjust he did with fine intellect, or so he tells us many years after the fact, writing and 'fictionalizing' (rather like the famous traveler Captain John Smith, self-celebrated for his military and sexual exploits on both Ottoman and

[37] The literature on the harem and Orientalist interpretation is rich. See, for a selection of the possibilities: Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Madeline Zilfi, ed., *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era* (Leiden: Brill, 1997). On the genres of English narrations of the harem, see Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients: Fictions of the East in England, 1662–1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 59–192. Ballaster also discusses the evolution of Orientalist scholarship in this regard in the seventeenth century (77–8). For German interpretations (literary and visual) of the Orient and the Turks at that time see Todd Kontje, *German Orientalisms* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007); and Hendrik Budde and Gereon Sievernich, eds., *Europa und der Orient 800–1900* (Gütersloh/München: Bertelsmann, 1989). See also, *Die Türken vor Wien 1683: Europa und die Entscheidung an der Donau* (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1982).

[38] For another take on the matrix of identities, see Goran Stanivukovic, "Cruising the Mediterranean: Narratives of Sexuality and Geographies of the Eastern Mediterranean in Early Modern English Prose Romances," in *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, ed., Goran Stanivukovic (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 59–74, esp. 65, 68.

[39] Nor is he the Venetian diplomat whose *relazioni* became a literary genre, combining the formulaic with the personalized. See Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Porte*, trans., Arthur Denner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Mustafa Soykut, *Image of the 'Turk' in Italy: A History of the 'Other' in Early Modern Europe: 1453–1683*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, Band 236 (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2001); and Maria Pia Pedani-Fabris, *Relazioni di Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato*, v. XIV, *Costantinopoli Relazioni Inedite (1512–1789)* (Padova: Bottega d'Erasmo, n.d.).

American frontiers) as an older and wiser narrator of distant lands and peoples.[40] Banerjee highlights the theatricality inherent both in the imagined self-portrait, and in the vision of the harem, a space which was evocative, forbidden, and the subject of great curiosity on the part of Manucci's audience.[41] As Manucci attempted to translate and clarify that space for his desirous readers, his own struggle to clarify himself (and 'India') in ethnolinguistic, 'national' (and more on that designation later), and even sexual terms, becomes apparent, though not transparent.

Banerjee focuses on questions of authority and identity, employing the device of 'postcards from the edge' to signify the type of vision of India (and the 'East' more generally) that travelers crafted for the consuming audience at home. This transposition of the notion of the 'postcard' (special marker of the colonial fashioning of 'other' in a later age) into the early modern era captures both the vignette-like character of many travel narratives and the snapshot-like quality of the often disjointed images and pieces of narrative that comprise the book of travels.[42] Often the reader (not to mention the scholar) of early modern travel literature (and maps) was left to fill in the blanks: the contexts, the intervening movements, the settings, or the identities of characters. Readers might receive or seize upon a single snapshot to represent the whole.[43] That snapshot quality begs the question of 'book' as a designator for the travel narrative in general or even for the selection of narratives treated in this volume, where journals,

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[40] See Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580–1631) in Three Volumes* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Smith's travels into Ottoman lands are contained in volume III; and Jennifer Goodman, *Chivalry and Exploration, 1298–1630* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1998), 192–218; her chapter on Smith is entitled, "The Captain's Self-Portrait Revisited."

[41] On the "theatricalization of place," and the reversion to myth vs. the aspiration to certainty, see Paul Carter, "Gaps in Knowledge: The Geography of Human Reason," in *Geography and Enlightenment*, eds., David N. Livingstone and Charles Withers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 295–318, esp. 308. Carter's focus is the Enlightenment and the implications of Vico's philosophy. But the issue of "intellectual (and imperial) advance" vs. mythopoetic constructions of geographic space is quite relevant to the period addressed here.

[42] For a treatment of more modern postcards, but one which also focuses on images of the female and sexuality, see Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

[43] Indeed Rubiés' and Roxburgh's treatments of Clavijo in this volume demonstrate the selectively that might be applied second or third-hand, to Clavijo's series of snapshots.

compendia, diplomatic reports, and poetic dialog all serve the travel narrative function, being or becoming books.

South Asia was certainly 'the edge' for Western travelers, even in Manucci's time. Despite the travel narratives published in Giovanni Battista Ramusio's *Navigationi et Viaggi* a century earlier between 1563 and 1606 in Manucci's 'home' town of Venice, despite the vigorous trade between South Asia and European lands, and despite the memory of the trials of earlier medieval travelers, 'India' (part of the 'third part of Asia' in Ptolemy's classification) remained a land of fancy in the early modern imagination—known through its goods and its stories and yet inevitably more remote and less familiar than the neighboring Ottoman lands.[44] The question of how 'familiar' Ottomans or east Indians were to European audiences in Manucci's time is a vexed one.[45] Certainly the tropes of describing 'Oriental' courts were well developed by the time Manucci decided to write. But the Mughal court of the seventeenth century and its environs were neither the space of European classical antiquity, nor a space crafted as indelibly Christian in early modern European literatures, as were Constantinople and Jerusalem. The lands of South Asia were not yet conceived of as European possessions or (except tangentially as places where saints and missionaries had trod) as parts of the European past. Hence, the Mughal court was more remote; and the Mughal harem was interpreted through the lens of the Ottoman

[44] Giovanni Battista Ramusio, *Navigationi et Viaggi, Venice 1563–1606*, intro and analysis by R.A. Skelton and George B. Parks, v. 1 (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1970). By Manucci's time, accounts of travel to India had proliferated; nonetheless I would argue that 'familiarity' is not the operative term. See Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 356, who argue that "by the middle of the seventeenth century, the stable topoi through which India was being addressed in European accounts [were]: caste, sati, the Juggernaut (or the temple-chariot of Jagannath), and idolatry." For some early modern travel in the opposite direction, see Michael H. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain 1600–1858* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004). On the vision of India for travelers from the Safavid domains of Persia at roughly the same time see, for example, Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 176–221.These authors illustrate some of the ways in which familiarity might change the nature of a narrator's descriptions (e.g., 139–41, 158).

[45] For four variations, among others, on the theme, see: John Michael Archer, *Old Worlds: Egypt, Southwest Asia, India, and Russia in Early Modern English Writing* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001); Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580–1720* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); and Linda McJannet, "Mapping the Ottomans on the Renaissance Stage," *Journal of Theatre and Drama*, 2 (1996): 9–34.

harem to which it was approximated, even in a land where the court was Muslim but the population overwhelmingly Hindu.

Despite his struggle with identity and its narration, Manucci did not hesitate to claim authority in clarifying what India and what the harem were. Again the notion of a special 'eye,' a vision that exceeds the norm, comes into play when Manucci claims special knowledge and experience of the harem. But there are in such travel accounts layers of knowledge, some deriving supposedly from eye-witness experience and some from what are variously called by travel authors, 'good authority,' 'reliable persons,' or named individuals. Even while functioning as a physician, Manucci cannot overcome the "visual impenetrability" of the harem; when his eyes are covered he is subject to being tricked (by a man pretending to be a woman), and even when his eyes are not covered he is subject to being tricked (by a woman pretending to be a man), although he claims to succumb to neither of these artifices. This sensation of the illusory (found in a different form in Clavijo's vision of Timur's tent complexes) is a characteristic associated both with the harem and with India itself in European travel accounts.[46] That illusory quality extended to ethnicity and religion in the Mughal harem. While the sultan was clearly a Muslim, the harem was ethnically and religiously mixed, a quality that served both to compromise the clarity of civilizational comparisons and to enhance the fascination of the harem for European readers.

The Homecoming

Wes Williams' essay raises the question of the 'homecoming.' Not every narrator returns home, and if he does, as with Charles Phillipe in Williams' essay, his family may not recognize him due to the physical changes exacted by time and the rigors of the journey. In his monastic cloister, Matthew Paris remained always at home, physically untouched, secure in the distance placed between himself and

[46] It is also nicely conveyed in the chapter title, "Dreams of Men Awake," in Ros Ballaster's treatment of English narratives of India, *Fabulous Orients*, 254–359. Ballaster also addresses the English preoccupation with the Hindu practice of sati (254–60), a preoccupation noted and pictured in Banerjee's essay. He points out that "The claim to true witness based on a long stay in the country described was the founding rhetorical gambit in the traveller's account," even though that claim to exactness "is rarely reinforced by the use of a first hand, first person narrative description of the individual traveller's experiences" (38).

the dangers, ambiguities, and pollutions of the Holy Land. Manucci, on the other hand, spending the bulk of his life abroad, can only imagine a linguistic 'home' and not a homecoming per se, as he had long since lost his home. He has experienced another sort of cloister, another sort of 'sacred' space in the Mughal harem; and that experience makes him both a self-proclaimed authoritative narrator and one condemned to the taint of the foreign. Manucci does not 'return home' to write his memoir; he is able only to send his narration from a great distance and hence to suffer the textual piracy visited upon him by narrators closer to home. Conversely, for Clavijo, the homecoming brought a comfortable life and the rewards of state service. In his narrative (the actual authorship of which is unclear), that home and that state were always close to hand, providing a pole of security and of comparative evaluation. For 'Abd al-Razzaq, in Rubiés' essay, returning to Herat from Vijayanagara, there was a related sense of 'home' and 'other,' even though Vijayanagara had appeared less foreign and more admirable than might have been expected. Home (its accessibility, its place in the traveler's mental map, and its history) was thus an important factor in what sort of tale the traveler told.

To assess the writing of the travel experience, and its sense of antecedents, Banerjee invokes the anthropologist Claude Lévi Strauss, and Williams invokes the American poet Elizabeth Bishop (d. 1979). What does it mean to stay at home and reflect on travel; what does it mean to be 'there' and search for originality? And how 'authentic' is the experience in either case? [47] Or does it matter? As suggested in the itineraries of Matthew Paris, authenticity (and the concomitant claim to be first to narrate foreign space) is only a privileged category in some forms of travel narrative; in others it is immaterial. Surely, the line cited in William's essay from Bishop's poem, *Questions of Travel*, which reads, "Should we have stayed at home, wherever that

[47] Jyotsna Singh, "History or Colonial Ethnography? The Ideological Formation of Edward Terry's A Voyage to East India (1655–1665) and The Merchants and Mariners Preservation and Thanksgiving," in *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period*, eds., Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna Singh (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 197–207, has noted the dilemma of the traveler whose accounts claim "experiential veracity based on eyewitness observation, while they also discursively map the new, yet over determined, discursive terrain. Thus, ironically, it is not surprising that their claims of eyewitness authenticity are as much in keeping with generic expectations as they are in offering factual accounts" (197). Singh also points out the dearth of a "sense of indigenous actuality" in European records, despite their "textual density" (204).

may be?" suggests the sense that Banerjee sees in Manucci of the "lack of stable associations" (p. 237). Perhaps the pilgrim itinerary, designed for those who stayed at home yet pressing them into an experience which was by definition an experience of the past and of the unreal, provided that stable association.

Issues: Era, Ethnology, and 'Nation'

Certain issues emerge as one traces through the essays in this volume, among them the question of what periodization seems logical once one relinquishes the notion of a medieval/early modern break. Linked to that question of periodization, the idea of 'nation' or 'national' identity and its relationship to ethnographic hierarchies also presents itself in several of these essays. In what ways and with what implications do we use the word 'national' to express both identity and a sense of cultural difference as we read the narratives and images treated here? Rubiés says the Ming constituted a "nationalist reaction to the Mongol rule of Kubilai Khan" (p. 100). Connolly sees maps as telling the foundational histories of nations, revealing the aspirations of the map maker and history writer. Jerusalem and Rome serve as generative cities of civilization, with civilization flowing East to West, and ultimately toward London, according to divine plan. Banerjee sees at least proto-nationalisms articulated as European traveler encounters Asian court and harem. As an Ottomanist historian, working on a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, polyglot empire—one which has been colored and distorted by the projecting-back of modern nationalisms—I am leery of the attribution of the 'national' to the peoples, cultures, and narratives of the long early modern era. Who exactly did our traveler authors think they were? How powerfully did connection to a state, an ethnicity, and one form of religious particularism subordinate competing identities that were local, hybrid, and situational? In its simplest form, it seems to me, 'nation,' meaning a self-identified people who share some connection of birth, race, or place, is perfectly applicable to our books of travels and travelers. However, 'nation' with its modern implications of affiliation by state or by citizenship, seems to me problematic, imposing as it does a shared identity upon those like Manucci or Paris for whom language, expatriate status, class, monastic brotherhood, professional activity, or kin might well have

served as better markers of identity. Despite the homogenizing rhetorics of Christendom (or Islamdom for that matter), we are well aware of the myriad confessional and behavioral divides that affected the populations who produced and consumed our travel narratives. Thus, the attribution of Spanish, Venetian, or Persian identity is meaningful in linguistic, or patrician, or commercial terms, in the period under consideration, but not necessarily indicative of 'nationalism.' The 'nation' may be crafted rhetorically when one is comparing Samarqand to Castile or Vijayanagara to Herat; but who beyond the king and his courtiers (and envoys) occupies that 'national,' narrative space? And what might 'nationalism' mean to Clavijo, or Manucci, or Paris, or 'Abd al-Razzaq? Perhaps Banerjee, who speaks of emerging nationalism in Manucci's time, actually best captures the problematic nature of the idea when she notes how Manucci's 'nation' is transformed. He both switches his national identity and is caught between his imagined (or longed for) nation of Venice and his situational nation in India. His nation is thus an "interstitial, provisionary space that marks a series of passing cultural attachments" (p. 252).[48] Even for those travelers who return home, or never leave it, that description may prove at least partially apt.

Periodization and Typology

William H. Sherman, addressing the evolution of early modern (English) travel writing, has noted the high level of variability in such writings: "The style and tone of texts could vary widely and their organization always seemed prone to reproduce the haphazard nature of the travels they described."[49] Travelers wrote for diverse reasons and had to balance their own objectives with those of patrons

[48] Inherent in the idea of itinerary (in many travel accounts of this time period) is the tracking of movement through ethnic space, understanding that space by means of ethnic, cultural, and language difference. But the itineraries of Matthew Paris trace historical space instead, homogenizing the lands and seas between London and Jerusalem into 'Christian' space, regardless of ethnology. Indeed, one might argue that the pilgrim narrative often crafts its vision of travel by ignoring or marginalizing ethnographic difference, crafting spaces full of sacred sites whose inhabitants are irrelevant except insofar as they impede the progress of the sacred journey. Even Timberlake (in Williams' essay), who certainly does not ignore ethnic difference, equates countryman and 'Moor' insofar as each serves as a good and helpful companion, facilitating the visit to Jerusalem and the return home.

[49] Sherman, "Stirrings and Searchings," 30–1.

and audiences. Nonetheless, Sherman does suggest that travel writings at a certain point began to take on "recognizable patterns:"

> Most texts began—after the requisite tribute to a patron and address to the reader—with some sort of justification for both travel and travel writing, in which lists of classical precedents were commonly invoked and biblical passages commonly cited. The travelers' experiences could then be described in letters, essays, sketches, plays and poems. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, the most characteristic form was the 'report' or 'relation' which combined a chronological narrative of movements and events with geographic and ethnographic observations. The narrative voice in these texts could be either strongly first-person…or strongly third-person … depending on whether the author wanted to emphasize the travelers or what they encountered. …[50]

This typology of travel resonates in various ways with the tales included in this volume, although the 'biblical' certainly took different forms in the writing of Persian travelers, and appeared with a greater or lesser degree of emphasis in the accounts of Christian narrators. The 'Reader' might be addressed directly or only obliquely. Chronology applies more directly to some books of travel than to others; and time may be presented in postcard format as readily as in the day-by-day narrative of the itinerary. Roxburgh's treatment of Clavijo and Banerjee's treatment of Manucci suggest that even when travel is presented in a progression of movements from one day to the next or from one feast to the next, time can be blurred or controverted by distance, memory, the veils of identity thrown up for the edification of the traveler, and the ephemeral nature of the 'fabric' of the city itself. Similarly, while the 'report' or 'relation' delivers geographic and ethnographic details in ordered form, its content may still include as much of the literary and the fanciful as that of its medieval antecedents.[51] Ethnographic observation, while

[50] Ibid., 30.

[51] Sherman is well aware of that characterization. But even sophisticated analyses of early modern European literatures still frequently employ a language of dichotomy to differentiate medieval literatures from more 'factual' early modern geographic accounts; see, for example, Goodman, *Chivalry and Exploration*, 45. The flip-side of such analyses is their important emphases on invocations of 'classical' and medieval pasts in early modern works (e.g., Goodman, 173). The links between medieval and early modern and between 'record' and literature across time have been explored by Mary Baine Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), e.g., 27, 87–121, whose work on European travel writing, first published in 1988, crosses both culture and time.

perfected into certain genres and types of representation in maps and narratives in the later part of the period under consideration, is certainly not a phenomenon of the seventeenth century. It is an old method for, and topic of, the travel tale. As for the narrative voice, problematized particularly in the essays of Williams and Banerjee, it does appear to move, though with some trepidation, toward particular uses of the 'I' as we proceed into the latter part of our period from medieval to early modern. Rubiés, however, points out that the development of the *riḥla* genre in medieval Muslim Spain and North Africa exemplifies a "more personal and original" form of travel writing, which begs the question of how unique to the early modern era greater subjectivity actually is.[52]

Wes Williams has suggested that one type of periodization is apparent in European pilgrimage accounts which embraced a new subjectivity as the Counter Reformation mobilized and the sixteenth century turned into the seventeenth.[53] This period saw the creation of various tracts of pilgrim rules, designed to preserve the sanctity of travel, the 'purity' of the pilgrim, and the standards for describing sacred travel in "ancient metaphors." Where Connolly's Matthew Paris taught readers to 'experience' the journey to the Holy Land through performing and viewing the sacred itinerary, Williams' priest, Henri de Castela, attempted, in his 1604 pilgrimage guide, to ensure that those who experienced the journey through actual travel would suppress their subjectivity, avoid the 'pollution' of communication, and practice narrative decorum. Both the author of the thirteenth century itinerary and the author of the seventeenth century advice manual are "policing pilgrim subjectivity," one audience in protected space and one in dangerous space (dangerous in part because of the enhanced options for secular forms of travel.). Where Paris' itinerary, whether its consumer was monk or prince, presumed stay-at-home readers, Castela's work presumed an audience of potential travelers, who would undertake the pilgrimage despite the

[52] Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 337, have suggested that "true travel-accounts" are characterized by a "major investment in the first-person narrative," an interesting proposition but one with which I am inclined to disagree as it restricts the genre to certain limited types of narration (and depiction).

[53] For another paradigm of the frames by which the European traveler encountered and narrated the "Holy Land," in the sixteenth century, see Jean-Pierre Brach, "L'Orient messianique chez Guillaume Postel," in *L'Orient dans l'histoire religieuse de l'Europe: l'invention des origines*, eds., Mohammad Ali Amir Moezzi and John Scheid (Turnhout, Belgium: Brephols, 2000), 121–30.

ongoing debate over whether the actual experience was worth the risks. Both audiences were taking on the pilgrim costume: Paris's readers becoming characters on a map, and Castela's becoming characters in their own witness texts or those of their fellow travelers.

Rubiés, despite the trans-'national' and transcivilizational focus of his work, looks to Europe and to the early modern era to craft a periodization based on European exceptionalism (my designation, not his).[54] Rooted in the medieval period and in the European 'cultural space' is the peculiar capacity to produce ethnographic travel narratives in significant numbers (especially by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) and to grant those narratives an "increasingly important role in the cultural system as a whole."

> The remarkable consequence is that after 1500 the European genre of travel writing (in which embassies constituted one important sub-genre) exploded into a solid tradition, with new rules of authentication and a new authority made possible by this very growth. [This, and] not any form of 'empirical' rationality or idea of superior civilization, is what seems unique to Europe. (109–110)

This argument constitutes assertions about genre, cultural difference, and survival. It returns us to a world historical periodization that looks to 1500 as a breaking point, the prelude to modernity. And it leads us back to the question of how one defines the 'book' of travels and how one plugs the production of travel literature into the ethnological hierarchies of any given time and place (the question with which Rubiés begins his own essay).[55]

Back to the Eye

Rather than dividing travel narratives into the medieval vs. the early modern, the report vs. the itinerary, or the offensive vs. the defensive, one might make the first division into that suggested in Connolly's work between travel experienced directly and travel experienced at a distance. Such a framing division serves to obfuscate any dramatic

[54] Rubiés article highlights the notion that European travelers had no monopoly on the idea of civilization, and "did not always consider themselves the most civilized" until well after 1600, although Latin Christendom along with Islam may have promoted a more rigid form of religious exclusionism than Mongol or Chinese ideologies (110).

[55] Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 342, 359–60, emphasize a seventeenth century "explosion" of European travel accounts, and later go on to compare, briefly, the Indo-Persian to the European 'republic of letters.'

separation between the travelers of the thirteenth century and those of the seventeenth or between European and Asian travelers. Another category of classification is the degree (and forms) of visuality in any given travel text (a category which bridges the gap between narrative and map). This category of visuality includes the nature of the act and narration of eye-witnessing, its claims to authority, and the felt or unfelt necessity of what Alam and Subrahmanyam have called "on the spot portraiture," and "the fragrance of the shifting moment."[56] Roxburgh has noted that the distinction between the poetic travel narrative (Yazdi) and the ambassadorial account (Clavijo) may not be as great as is sometimes assumed; what might be more critical is the picture conveyed.

Banerjee has posed the issue of visuality in another way. She suggests that Manucci encountered the forbidden space of the harem through an 'out of body' experience, a characterization which approximates his journey to that of Matthew Paris, even though Manucci was 'there' and Paris was not. Banerjee thus problematizes the notion of the eyewitness, as does Connolly who demonstrates the involvement of body and eye in the consumption of Paris' itinerary maps which by conventional designation are not (indeed, are even intentionally antithetical to) the 'eye-witness' account. Paris' maps guide the reader within the margins of the map but free the eye rather than constrain it as the accounts of Williams' observers and admonishers often do. Rubiés and Roxburgh, meanwhile, show how substantially the meaning of eyewitness can diverge, seeing with a conditioned eye, seeing through the veils of cultural difference, or purposefully not seeing, by accident or design (as in Banerjee's image of the blindfolded physician in the harem).

Tracing through all the essays in this volume is the notion of the traveler's eye, the ways in which the gaze shapes the sites which are the object of travel (whether they are experienced directly or at a distance). While that is certainly not surprising, what is intriguing is the ways in which the site shapes the traveler's eye and the specific language whereby each narrator addresses the question of sight: ethnic sight, proper sight, distant sight, sacred sight, blind sight, hindsight, illusion, fabrication, concealment, artifice, beguilement.[57] The

[56] See, Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 43, addressing the effects (imposed uniformity and coherence) of "the retrospective pen."

[57] For another take on the traveler as "half-blind," see Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients*, 111, 119.

'eye' is also the emblem of insight, the ways in which certain kinds of knowledge condition modes of looking and modes of interpretation. David Roxburgh concludes his essay with a poem by the Persian traveler, Sharaf al-Din 'Ali Yazdi who admonishes his reader to gaze upon the world "with the eye of insight." This is the task of the traveler himself, in these accounts, attempting to order and clarify for his audience the 'soft architectures' of the sites and spectacles to which he is witness. And it is our task as well, taking the architectures (hard and soft, stated and unstated) of text and image, and casting them into some notion of book, place, author, and reader.

CHAPTER TWO

LATE MEDIEVAL AMBASSADORS AND THE PRACTICE OF CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS 1250–1450

Joan-Pau Rubiés

The Three Eyes of the World and the Notion of Civilization

In the midst of the cosmopolitan place that was Timur's (Tamerlane's) court in Samarqand, one of the most peculiar groups of guests must have been the Castilian embassy that, led by the Dominican friar Alonso Páez de Santa María and by the hidalgo Ruy González de Clavijo, arrived there in 1404, in good time to meet the ruthless conqueror before he embarked upon an expedition to China, fell ill, and died. The anonymous journal of the ambassadors' three-year journey to Samarqand and of their long stay there is remarkably detailed and precise, and contains numerous descriptions of food and drink, cities, gardens, buildings and other artistic objects.[1] The narrative also fully captures the terror with which Timur was obeyed, the arbitrariness of his rule, and the lavishness of his entertainment.

There is no doubt that the Castilian representatives were treated with honor, although the unexpected death of Timur (r. 1369–1405) and the ensuing struggle made their return to Spain rather more

[1] There exist two important fifteenth-century manuscripts of the journal. The one possibly closest in language to the original is now in the Spanish National Library at Madrid, and was published in a critical edition by Francisco López Estrada, ed., *Embajada a Tamorlán* (Madrid: CSIC, 1943). A more complete copy, possibly of Aragonese origin, is found in the British Library, Ms Add. 16,613. However, the best known version is the text published in the sixteenth century by Gonzalo Argote de Molina, *Historia del Gran Tamorlán* (Seville: Andrea Pescioni, 1582), often reprinted and the basis for the English version by Guy Le Strange, *Embassy to Tamerlane 1403–1406* (London: Routledge & Sons, 1928). This English version is often not reliable. For quotations I have used the recent composite edition: Ruy González de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, ed., Francisco López Estrada (Madrid: Castalia, 1999), which I have compared to the Madrid and British Library texts.

dangerous.[2] One important element in understanding this embassy is how little it mattered in practical terms. The origin of the exchange of embassies was almost accidental, namely the battle of Ankara in 1402 in which Timur and his Turco-Mongol alliance defeated sultan Bayezid (r. 1389–1402) and the Ottoman Turks. This victory, from a Christian perspective, seemed to provide relief for the beleaguered Byzantine rulers of Constantinople, and for that reason Henry III of Castile (r. 1393–1406) had sent two of his knights to witness Timur's advance. In the background was the recurrent European dream of an Eastern alliance against the more immediate Muslim enemy, which in the thirteenth-century had led to a number of famous Latin embassies to the Mongols and their successor regimes in Persia. Hence, after the battle, Henry's representatives were hosted by the victor, and invited Timur to send an envoy to Castile, which he did. In turn, the Christian king sent Friar Alonso Páez and Clavijo with presents of 1403 (in this return embassy, the Castilians were accompanied by the friendly Timurid ambassador, Muhammad al-Kashi, who facilitated their journey to Samarqand).[3] Castile was however very far from Samarqand, and the only reason why Timur privileged these Frankish envoys over those from China, Turkey, and Egypt was because they increased his prestige and self-esteem. For the Castilians, the exchange of presents and letters, with the almost obsessive feasting that followed it, could easily remain at a very superficial level, because, other than not offending Timur, little else needed to be done.

For the anonymous writer who composed an account of the journey, describing the largely unfamiliar diversity of the Timurid court posed a number of challenges.[4] His answer was to provide a precise

[2] By mid-November 1405 Timur was ready to dispatch the ambassadors, but he was feeling ill and was therefore unable to see them off personally: Clavijo, *Embajada* (1999), 305–9. This suggests that Timur had been ill well before he departed for his expedition to conquer China. He died three months later (mid-February) and in the chaos that ensued the ambassadors found themselves stuck at Tabriz (sometimes under house arrest) for five months.

[3] The "cavallero Chaatrax que avía nombre Mahomad Alcagí," was probably a member of the Ulus Chaghatai, the alliance of Turco-Mongol tribes which made possible Timur's conquests.

[4] The journal has been conventionally attributed to Ruy González de Clavijo, one of the two main ambassadors, since its publication by Gonzalo Argote de Molina in 1582. It is not however obvious that it was composed by the ambassador himself, because the work always refers to Clavijo and all other ambassadors in an unambiguous third-person narrative voice, for example declaring that "I began to write the day

and thorough daily record of what the ambassadors saw and heard after they left Spain. The narrative is simple and circumspect, with perhaps more emphasis on places seen than on peoples encountered. It relates the circumstances of the diplomatic mission but not its contents, and includes some historical and legendary material, obviously from hearsay. However, the writer's commitment to detailed empiricism leaves open the question of how much the Castilian observer, with a limited competence in oriental languages, really understood. What was the possible basis for his understanding of cultural diversity? Was it a culturally-specific idiom? And did this idiom include the equivalent of a secular concept of 'civilization,' or was it largely limited to the medieval European emphasis on the priority of religious classification?

In this article I shall seek to analyze a variety of ambassadorial reports in order to answer these questions and assess their broader significance for our understanding of cross-cultural encounters. Whether the ethnographic idiom was culturally-specific, in particular, requires considering accounts produced by writers belonging to

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when the ambassadors reached the port of Santa Maria near Cádiz," Clavijo, *Embajada* (1999), 80. Guy Le Strange's English version mistranslates this and other crucial passages. Considering the genre it is very unlikely that Clavijo was imitating Caesar's *Commentaries*, as a humanist such as Pius II would. As for the other main ambassador, the Dominican friar Alonso Páez de Santamaría, he must have been versed in Latin letters, but again it seems strange that he would refer to himself in the third person, and the writer shows himself somewhat superficial in his use of theological distinctions (although he engaged in detailed conversation with Armenians and Greeks in Trebizond about their peculiar religious practices). The author of the journal, who usually avoids delivering any personal opinions, is a modest figure, probably someone who wrote in a professional capacity and was commissioned to keep a journal. Unfortunately, we do not possess any complete list of the members of the embassy, which numbered 14 or 15 people, including retainers (a third named participant was Gómez de Salazar, of the king's guard). The most probable candidate is the gentleman-poet Alonso Fernández de Mesa, whose participation in the journey may be deduced from the testimony of another fifteenth-century Andalusian traveler, Pero Tafur, *Travels and Adventures 1435–1439*, ed., Malcolm Letts (London: Routledge & Sons, 1926), 135: "By this route the ambassadors of king Enrique traveled when they went to the court of Timur-Beg. I was told by Don Alfonso Fernández de Mesa that from there to the farthest point they reached was as far as from Kaffa to Castile". The possibility that a retainer with writing skills like Mesa was asked to keep a journal by Clavijo or even the king appears more likely if we consider comparable travel journals of the fifteenth century, such as those two recording the travels of the Bohemian nobleman Leo of Rozmital through the courts of Western Europe in 1465–1466*: The Travels of Leo of Rozmital*, ed., Malcolm Letts (Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society, 1955). Unfortunately the misattribution persists in popular histories—see for example Justin Marozzi, *Tamerlane. Sword of Islam, Conqueror of the World* (London: Harper Collins, 2004), 377–93.

diverse traditions. The existence of a body of ambassadorial reports which relate to a series of interconnected 'civilizations' in Europe and Asia within the space of 200 years, from c. 1250 to c. 1450, offers an exceptional opportunity to compare non-Western narratives to European accounts of non-Europeans. This exercise can help question a misplaced emphasis on 'Western orientalism' before the period when the great voyages of discovery, combined with the impact of humanism in Europe, generated a new dynamic. It can also help determine whether there is anything which can be considered unique about Western ethnography, travel literature, and attitudes to other cultures. Three great late-medieval ethnographic traditions are worth considering: Latin Christian (with its vernaculars), Islamic (Arab and Persian), and Chinese.

I propose to begin with a small anecdote which invites us to consider whether these three great medieval civilizations shared an understanding of what it was to be 'civilized.' In his description of the different peoples and goods brought into Samarqand from different parts of the world, the author of the narrative of the Castilian embassy makes particular mention of the things brought from Cathay:

> And the goods that are imported into this city from Cathay are the best and most precious of all those brought thither from other parts, and those from Cathay say it themselves, that they are the subtlest people in the whole world; and they say that they see with two eyes, and that the Moors are blind, and that the Franks have one eye, and that they [the Cathayans] have an advantage over all the nations of the world in the things that they make.[5]

Ruy González de Clavijo and his companions had the opportunity to obtain first-hand information about Cathay. As the narrative of the embassy makes clear, they saw a caravan of camels which had arrived from "Cambalec" (modern Beijing), and spoke with a man who had been in the Chinese capital for six months and was able to describe it (that man was possibly a Genoese merchant, or perhaps an Armenian, since he compared Cambalec with the city of Tabriz,

[5] Clavijo, *Embajada* (1999), 303: "E de las cosas que del Catay a esta dicha ciudad vienen son las mejores e más preciadas de cuantas allí vienen de otras partes. E los de Catay así lo dicen, que ellos son las gentes más sotiles que en el mundo ha; e dicen que ellos han dos ojos, e que los Moros son ciegos, e que los Francos han un ojo, e que [ellos los del Catay] lievan avantajas en las cosas que fazen a todas las naciones del mundo."

saying that the former was twenty times larger). What the Castilians heard made them aware not only that an impressive 'civilization' existed in Cathay, but also that the Cathayans classified themselves above the Latin Europeans (the Franks), who in turn were perceived to be above the Muslim nations.

There is no doubt that the saying is authentic. The proverb of the 'three eyes of the world' was so widespread that in fact it was reported independently by a variety of European travelers throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, from prince Hayton of Armenia in 1307, to Nicolò Conti in 1441 and Iosafa Barbaro in 1487. It was also echoed by a number of European writers who never went to Asia, from the mysterious fourteenth-century writer who composed the Book of John Mandeville, to Renaissance historians and cosmographers like João de Barros, Jerónimo Román and Giovanni Botero. What is striking about the way the Castilian journal reports the proverb is the clarity with which it distinguishes the Chinese, the western Europeans and all other nations as three distinct civilizations, adding the clarification that these other nations are essentially "the Moors" (the Muslims). The saying, as reported, also makes it quite explicit that the production of sophisticated artistic goods is the most obvious basis for the classification of 'levels of civilization.' In fact, it was probably the objects they saw which convinced the Castilians to take this account of Cathay seriously.

It was only the careful observations of the writer during many months among the central Asian tribes and Christian Armenians that created a basis for the tentative 'decoding' of unknown 'language-games'—that is, not just those languages used for verbal communication, but also the whole range of cultural codes and assumptions that make all kinds of ritual, artistic, and other social exchanges meaningful.[6] However, while the journal of the embassy is most faithful when describing direct observations, the writer was an obvious victim of the need to rely on interpreters and tended to fall prey to the legendary when reporting hear-say. For example, the Castilians were often confused about the religious identity of "gentiles" (the contemporary term used for peoples following any non-Biblical law) living in India or China, and believed, among other things, that the

[6] I take up my own use of the concept of 'language-games,' as argued more extensively in Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance. South India through European Eyes,1250–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), xiv–xvii.

emperor of Cathay (that is, Ming China) had actually converted to Christianity.[7] The identification of all non-Muslims in India as Christians started with an account of the legend of Saint Thomas in Mylapore, which the Castilians possibly heard in Samarqand from some Armenian or Nestorian Christian, and then had confirmed by asking Muslim Indian traders.[8] Indeed, it is not impossible that the Muslim informers of the European travelers routinely applied the same word for Christians and idolaters. For instance the Persian word *tersa* (Christian) was often applied in general to other conquered 'idolaters,' including Zoroastrians (fire-worshippers), Armenians, and Uighurs. Thus the legend of Saint Thomas could be used as a basis

[7] The term 'gentiles' was of course inherited by the Christian fathers from Judaism, and widely used alongside the less rigorous (and less common) 'pagans' in medieval and early modern European ethnographies. Gentilism was usually associated with idolatry, less often (and more controversially) to the idea of natural monotheism. For many Christian and Muslim writers, from Thomas Aquinas to Ibn Khaldun, gentiles could be civilized because civilization was a natural pursuit of mankind, whilst the prophetic Revelation and religious law was not naturally given.

[8] The passage concerning the 'Christians' of India has remained mysterious because a fragment describing the tomb of Saint Thomas was omitted from Argote de Molina's 1582 edition. The Madrid text is fuller, but also truncated. The only complete version is found in the manuscript in the British Library, an excellent copy of the fifteenth century by one Anthonius of León. I offer here the passage from this manuscript (MS Add 16,613. f. 93v), marking the beginning of the published versions (compare with Estrada, ed. (1943), 184 and 297): "[British ms.] And in this land of India there is an island where there is the body of Saint Thomas, and a river passes through this island. And they say that the river ends in that Church, which goes no further, and many people go there and keep a vigil that night. They say that the body of Saint Thomas is preserved erect and whole, and that he has [Madrid ms.] a raised arm, and that on the day of his feast he clutches a man and keeps him strongly so that he can not escape, and has him for a whole year until the next, when he leaves him and takes another, and the first one is buried. This was enquired from some merchants from the said India who were in Samarqand, whether it was true this thing about Saint Thomas, and they answered that they were Moors and had not seen it, but they had heard it many times. [Argote] The people of this India are Christian, and the lord and the majority in the Greek fashion [i.e. heretical], and amongst them there are other Christians who mark their face with fire and have their own opinions [obviously *Parsis*]. These who mark themselves with fire have less status than the others. Moors and Jews also live amongst them, but they are subject to the Christians." A similar reconstruction is offered by Estrada in Clavijo, *Embajada* (1999), 288. This account fits reasonably well with the legends of the tomb of Mylapore as heard by Marco Polo a little more than one hundred years earlier, and by the Portuguese about one hundred years later. (The idea of the "island" is probably a mistranslation, which echoes however the *topos* of the island as a magic place in the Spanish chivalric literature of the period. The reference to the mouth of a river is otherwise reasonable if we consider the actual location of the tomb at Mylapore).

for the misleading classification of Hindus and Parsis as some sort of peculiar Christians, 'heretical' from a Latin perspective, like the Greeks.

The saying about the three eyes of the world is interesting because it exemplifies the emergence of a cross-cultural concept, however rudimentary, of a hierarchy of civilizations. It was repeatedly reported in Europe, but the origins of the statement are oriental; in particular, it seems to express the clash between the increasingly Islamicised Mongol and Turkish aristocracies who dominated Central Asia and the settled civilizations they had conquered, from China to the fringes of Europe. The first attestation of the saying in Europe, at the beginning of prince Hayton (Hetoum) of Armenia's *Flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient*, makes clear the Cathayan origin of the saying:

> These people, who are so simple in their faith and in spiritual things, are wiser and subtler than all the other peoples in material works. And the Cathayans say that they alone see with two eyes, and that the Latins see with one eye, but of the other nations they say that they are blind. And from this it can be understood that they see the other peoples as thick-witted.[9]

Hayton's work was a historical and geographical report, on central Asia and the Mamluk power of Egypt, which he dictated for Pope Clement V (1305–14) in 1307 when he was living in exile from Cilician Armenia (having left Cyprus for France, he was made prior of an Abbey near Poitiers).[10] His account, strictly contemporary with

[9] Hayton of Armenia, "La Flor des Estoires de la Terre d'Orient," in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades. Documents Arméniens* (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1906) II, 121, "Cestes gens, qui tant son simples en lur creance e ès choses espiriteus, sont plus sages et plus sotils que totes autres gens ès euvres corporels. E dient les Cataïns que il sont ceus qui voient de II oils, e des Latins disent q'il voient d'un oil, mès les autres nacions dient que sont avuegles. E por ce puet om entendre que il tienent les autres gens de gros entendement." For the Latin version, ibid., 262, "Homines vero illius patrie [illarum partium] sunt sagacissimi et omni calliditate repleti et ideo in omni arte et scientia vilipendunt alias nationes: et dicunt, quod ipsi soli sunt qui duobus oculis respiciunt, Latini vero uno lumine tantum vident, sed omnes alias naciones asserunt esse cecas et per hoc certissime demonstratur quod omnes alios reputant esse rudes".

[10] Hayton dictated his story at Poitiers to Nicole Faulcon of Toul in French, although it was immediately translated into Latin. Hayton's exile resulted from his participation in factional politics at the Armenian court. He was the opponent of King Hayton II and an ally of the rulers of Cyprus of the house of Lusignan. He would return to power in Armenia after 1307. On the Armenian prince see ibid., xxiii–cxlii.

the early circulation of Marco Polo's narrative, was part of the futile search for a new crusading strategy which marked the transition from the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries. Written by a member of a pro-Latin faction within the ruling elite of Cilician Armenia, it also represents one of the clearest expressions of the cultural and political interaction between Eastern and Western Christians in the wake of the virtual retreat of the Franks from *Outremer* after the loss of Acre in 1291. Hayton bears testimony to the fading hopes for a Christian-Mongol alliance which, despite the conversion of the Ilkhan Ghazan (r. 1295–1304) to Islam, persisted as long as the Mongols went on attacking the Mamluks in Syria.[11] Interestingly, the Christian Hayton was quite willing to concede that on matters of civilization—that is, as far as 'material works' were concerned—the Cathayans were correct in their assessment.[12]

[11] The Armenians who had cooperated with the Mongols at the end of the thirteenth century were to be disappointed by their overlords. In 1307, while the *Flor des Estoires de la Terre d'Orient* was published in Europe, Hayton's opponent, King Hayton II, who had abdicated, and his nephew Leo IV, were both murdered by the Mongol emir Bilarghu whom they were visiting. On the other hand, Ghazan's conversion to Islam was not the main impediment to the continuation of the Western crusade. The crusade failed to take off in part because the Mamluks and the Turks were strong enemies in the field and above all because the main leader among Christian princes, the king of France, was more interested in raising money in France than in fighting abroad.

[12] It is probably from his account, which circulated extensively in French and Latin, that a few decades later the author of *The book of Sir John Mandeville* took the following passage on the Cathayans, which he then characteristically combined with other material: "It can be said that they are the most subtle people of the world in all the sciences that they practice and in all arts, because in subtlety, malice and wit they surpass all other people of the world. And they have a good expression for this, for they say that they see with two eyes and the Christians only see with one eye, because they are the most subtle after them; but they say that all the other nations do not see at all and that they are blind of science and artistry." I translate from the 1371 Continental French manuscript of the *Travels*, the oldest extant, as edited by Letts: "Mais tant puisie bien dire, que ce sont les plus subtilz gentz en toutes sciences dont il se mellent et en tout arteficerie qui soient au monde, car de subtillite, de malice et de tous engins ilz passent tous ceuls du monde. Et ilz le sceuent bien dire, car ilz dient quil voient de II yex et les Crestiens ne voient que dun oeil, pour ce quilz sont les plus subtilz apres eulz; mais ilz dient que toutes les autres nacions ne voient goute et quil sont auveugles de science et douvraige." See *Mandeville's Travels: Texts and Translations*, ed., Malcolm Letts, 2 vols. (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1953), 352. What is most interesting about this version is that Mandeville has transformed the 'Latins' or 'Franks' into Christians. An armchair writer, the author of the fake travelogue could forget the perspective adopted by ambassadors who had to come to terms with the various groups of oriental Christians (mainly Armenians and Nestorians) present in Central Asia, often their own interpreters.

Hayton of Armenia probably derived his knowledge of China and Chinese art from the cosmopolitan Persian court of Tabriz under the Mongol Ilkhans, with whom the Armenian princes had seen fit to cooperate.[13] This was the court from which in 1287 the Sino-Turkish Christian monk Rabban Sauma, and in subsequent years also various Genoese merchants, were sent as envoys of the Mongol rulers of Persia and Iraq to the courts of Latin Christendom. It was here too where in c. 1294 a rather orientalized Marco Polo, travelling as a trusted servant of the Turco-Mongol elites in the retinue of some brides sent to his relatives by Kubilai the Great Khan of Cathay (r. 1260–94), stayed for nine months on his way back from China to Venice.[14] Interestingly, it was also at this time and place that the illustrated book became a distinct tradition within Persian Islam, initially under the direct influence of both Chinese and European styles. Or at least this is what the surviving illustrations that accompanied the remarkable *Jamīʿ al-tawārīkh* (Compendium of Chronicles) by the Ilkhanid vizier and patron Rashid al-Din (1247–1318) suggest.[15] The appearance of the proverb of the three eyes of the world c. 1300 thus coincides with this remarkable cultural synthesis, made possible by the extent of Mongol rule and by their straddling a variety of religious and linguistic traditions.

[13] The Mongol Ilkhans (1256–1335) ruled over a vast territory extending from Khorasan in Eastern Iran, to Iraq and Eastern Anatolia, with the Persian cultural elites acting as their administrative class, and Greater Iran (*Iranzamin*) as their heartland. In theory they remained in alliance with the Great Khans residing in China.

[14] Marco Polo was in Tabriz during the reign of Geikhatu (1291–1295), who had succeeded his brother Arghun and who, under the influence of the resident ambassador from the Great Khan, Pulad Ching-sang, attempted to introduce paper money into his domains, with disastrous results (Geikhatu was soon overthrown).

[15] Sheila Blair, "The Religious Art of the Ilkhanids," in *The Legacy of Gengis Khan. Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia 1253–1353*, eds., Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2002): 104–33. Robert Hillenbrand, "The Arts of the Book in Ilkhanid Iran," ibid., 134–67. On Rashid al-Din, who was a Jewish convert to Islam (as Ghazan Khan was a Mongol convert to Islam), there is a large literature. For his role as patron in particular see Sheila Blair, "Patterns of Patronage and Production in Ilkhanid Iran: the Case of Rashid al-Din," in *The Court of the Il-Khans, 1290–1340*, eds., Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art, 12 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996): 39–62. Notably, the *Jamīʿ al-tawārīkh* was both a history of the Mongol conquests and a universal history with chapters on China, India, and Europe ('The Franks'). These additional chapters were commissioned by Ghazan's brother and successor Öljeitü (r. 1304–1316), and for Europe (admittedly the weakest section) Rashid al-Din probably used as informers either Italian merchants or the mendicant friars sent as missionaries by successive popes.

However, the proverb's influence was to transcend these particular origins, and was popular well into the fifteenth century. It was reported as late as 1487 in Iosafa Barbaro's relation of his embassy to the Turkoman ruler of Western Persia, Uzun Hasan (r. 1452–78).[16] Barbaro, an experienced traveler, had been sent by the Republic of Venice in 1471 to seek an alliance with the Turkish rulers of Persia against the Ottomans (it is remarkable the extent to which the structure of this diplomatic venture mirrored hopes for a Mongol alliance against the Mamluks in the thirteenth century, and European contacts with the Safavid dynasty in Persia in the sixteenth and seventeenth). At one moment of Barbaro's narrative Uzun Hasan shows him some precious stones and asks him how valuable they are. The Venetian answers, with prudence, that he cannot give a figure, but that in any case they are worth more than any amount of gold, at least as much as a city. To which the king answers, approving his commercial sagacity:

> "*Prancatani Catani.* The world has three eyes, the Cathayans have two and the Franks one" ... I had before heard the word 'Cataini' [Cathayans] from an ambassador of the Tartar emperor [probably the Khan of the Golden Horde] on his return from Cathay in 1436, who, passing through Tana [a commercial port in the Black Sea] I lodged in my house with all his people, hoping to obtain from him some jewel. And one day, talking about Cathay, he told me how the heads of the household of that prince knew who the Franks were. And when I asked how it was possible that they would know about the Franks, he said, "and why should we not? You know that today we are near Capha [Caffa, a Crimean port, which was a colony of Genoese merchants] and that we continuously do business there and that they come to us." And he added, "We the Cathayans have two eyes, and you the Franks have one;" and turning towards the Tartars who were there he added, "and you none," but smiling. And in this way I understood better the proverb of that lord [Uzun Hasan] when he used those words.[17]

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[16] The Mongol Ilkhans were succeeded in Western Iran by various tribal nomadic groups of Mongol or Turkoman extraction, of which the confederation of the Aq-Qoyunlu ('White Sheep') led by Uzun Hasan became dominant during the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The Turkmen, nomadic western Turks settled in Anatolia before the Mongol invasion, had remained largely separate from the new Turco-Mongol ruling class, but the Aq-Qoyunlu had been tactical allies of Timur, and later of his son Shahrukh. They fought the Ottomans for control of Eastern Anatolia, hence Uzun Hasan eventually attracted Venetian envoys to his new capital in Tabriz.

[17] "Viaggio dello istesso Messer Iosaphat Barbaro in Persia," in *Viaggi fatti da Vinetia alla Tana, in Persia, in India, et in Costantinopoli*, ed., Aldo Manuzio (Venice, 1545), 34 r, "*Prancatani Catani.* Tre occhi ha il mondo, due ne hanno i Cataini, et uno i Franchi (...)

Barbaro's anecdote is entirely credible in light of the previous saying collected by the Castilian ambassadors in Timur's court. It strongly indicates a similar Chinese origin, and a similar Central Asian route of transmission for the proverb. It also suggests that as the Turkish tribes consolidated their power in Persia, they could accept the Chinese classification as valid (even after the Mongols had been forced out by the Ming), and came to look down upon those nomadic Central Asian tribes who had assisted their own conquests as uncivilized, with a paternalistic smile on their lips.[18] Thus, they adopted not only the Muslim faith and the Persian literary and administrative

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Questa parola 'Cataini Cataini' haveva udita per avanti da uno ambasciatore dello Imperator Tartaro, il qual ritornava del Cataio del 1436. Il qual facendo la via della Tana [a commercial port in the Black Sea] io accetai in casa con tutti li suoi, sperando haver da lui qualche gioia. Et un giorno, ragionando del Cataio, me disse como quelli capi della porta di quel signore saperano chi erano i Franchi. E dimandogli io se l'era possibile che havesseno cognition de i Franchi, disse, 'E come non la dobbiamo haver noi. Tu sai como noi semo appreso à Capha [another Crimean port, was a colony of Genoese merchants], et che al continuo pratichiamo in quel luogo, et loro vengono in el nostro lordo.' Et soggiunse, 'noi Cataini habbiamo due occhi, et voi Franchi uno;' è voltandosi verso i tartari i quali erano li, soggiunse: 'e voi nessuno,' sorridendo tuttavia. Et però meglio intesi il proverbio di questo signore quando usò quelle parole."

[18] Barbaro's passage seems ambiguous because the "Tartar" ambassador assumes the role of a Cathayan when explaining the proverb. However the same ambassador appears in other parts of Barbaro's narrative discussing the Cathayans in the third person. It also seems likely (from Barbaro's own account of communications with Cathay) that he had come through Samarqand. Of course, in the fifteenth century the rulers of China were no longer Tartars, but Chinese (although the Ming employed many Mongols and Turks in their service). The "Tartar emperor" of 1439 for whom Barbaro's informant was ambassador to the Chinese court in Beijing may have been an Oyirad Mongol (their leader Toghon had appointed Toghto Bukha as heir to the title of Great Khan), or perhaps the ambassador was a Chaghatai representative of Timur's son Shahrukh. However, the most likely seems Kuchuk Muhammad, khan of the Golden Horde that controlled the area between the Volga and the Black Sea. What is implied in the passage above is that because the Turco-Mongol tribes regularly traded with Europeans at the ports of the Black Sea, so the Chinese could easily know about the Europeans. The different Turco-Mongol khans, in Persia or elsewhere, maintained artistic and commercial contacts with the Chinese court even after the expulsion of the Mongol dynasty in the fourteenth century, and, for instance, Chinese art was a major influence in the formation of the new style of Persian miniature painting in the fifteenth century (especially in Herat). Barbaro also remarked that the Turks, for instance the "Zagatai" [Chaghatai] of Transoxiana, Timur's allies, had a tendency to confuse the pagan religion of Cathay with Christianity. This simple Central Asian classification based on a superficial understanding of the Muslim concept of idolatry, which amalgamated Buddhists and Christians and was sometimes also extended to Hindus and Parsis, is, as I suggested, a likely explanation for the confusion in the journal of Clavijo's embassy.

traditions, but also the artistic and technological standards set in China and, secondarily, those known from European traders.[19] Barbaro's anecdote suggests that the proverb was common in Asia after the thirteenth century, especially in the Central Asian culture of merchants and travelers, and that it had spread as a result of the destruction brought about by the Mongol and Turkish invasions of the late Middle Ages, which left the far East and the far West as the most stable centers of civilization.[20]

This conception of a world with two main centers of civility at its two extremes gained some currency amongst Muslim writers of this period: in the fourteenth century the Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta declared that "The Chinese (it is well known) are of all peoples the most skilful in crafts and attain the greatest perfection in them."[21]

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[19] I must here disagree with David Morgan's conclusion that Persian historians' lack of interest in Europe during the Mongol period reflected the fact that, for Islam, Europe was effectively a remote and barbarous backwater, an opinion that is often repeated by historians of Islamic countries in their effort to emphasize the economic and cultural centrality of Islamic civilization during the Middle Ages. See David Morgan, "Persian Perceptions of Mongols and Europeans," in *Implicit Understandings. Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed., Stuart Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): 201–17. That this was the case in the eleventh century is obvious, and it also colored Arab perceptions of the crusaders in Syria as witnessed by writers like Usamah Ibn-Munqidh, but things certainly changed after the thirteenth century, and the evidence for a notable admiration for 'the Franks' among the new Turkish elites contained in Barbaro's account is not isolated. The very evidence discussed by Morgan, Rashid al-Din's history of the Franks and the travel narrative of the Nestorian priest Rabban Sauma, are indications of this new awareness by 1300. Of course, for geo-strategic, cultural, and economic reasons, India and even China remained more important to Persian rulers than the remote Latin West. It is also true that the weight of the historiographical tradition in both Arabic and Persian was against any serious interest in the history of the Christian infidels. This, however, was only a limitation within highly conventionalized literary genres. The most intelligent Muslim authors were aware of the new importance of the 'Franks' not only during the crusades, but especially after.

[20] The importance of China as an economic and cultural influence over the Central Asian and Persian world in the late Middle Ages is well recognized, but the appearance of 'the Franks' as a model of civilization for Muslims as far as Persia, although a marginal phenomenon, in nonetheless striking, and clearly precedes the arrival of the Portuguese to the Indian Ocean. On this, see the suggestive argument by Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam. Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), v. 2, 329–68; Hodgson however tends to exaggerate the intellectual influences of Islam in Europe, which over the medieval centuries were clearly secondary to the direct reception of the classical tradition.

[21] *The Travels of Ibn Battūta*, trans., H.A.R. Gibb and C.F. Beckingham, 5 vols. (The Hakluyt Society: Cambridge and London, 1953–1995), IV, 891. He commented specifically that they surpassed the Greeks in painting.

Later that century the Tunisian historian Ibn Khaldun, when giving an account of the spread of the sciences, reported as a new development that "we hear that the philosophical sciences are now greatly cultivated in the country of the Franks, that is the territory of Rome, and along the adjacent northern shore [of the Mediterranean]."[22] It was not a peculiar North African view. When in the fifteenth century the Persian traveler from Khorasan, ʿAbd al-Razzaq, tried to find words to describe the beauty and workmanship of a South Indian temple, he referred to the fact that it was all covered with paintings, "after the manner of the Franks and the people of Khata," thus confirming the importance of those two artistic standards also assumed by the proverb on the three eyes of the world.[23]

A fourth independent report of this same proverb must be mentioned. In 1441, while interviewing the Venetian merchant-adventurer Nicolò Conti on his return to Europe after a long Eastern sojourn, the humanist Poggio Bracciolini, then acting as secretary to Pope Eugene IV (1431–47), gave the saying a slightly different formulation, without explicit reference to Cathay:

> They call us Franks and say that, while they call other nations blind, they themselves have two eyes and we have only one, because they consider that they excel all others in prudence.[24]

Although Poggio Bracciolini might conceivably have known Hayton's chronicle in Latin, neither the language he employs in this passage,

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[22] I translate from Ibn Khaldún, *Introducción a la Historia Universal (Al-Muqaddimah)*, ed., Elías Trabulse, trans., Juan Feres (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977), 891–2. I have also consulted Franz Rosenthal's version, *The Muqaddimah, an Introduction to History*, 3 vols. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958).

[23] "Narrative of the Journey of Abd-er Razzak," *India in the Fifteenth Century*, ed., R.H. Major (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1858), 21. Wheeler M. Thackston, ed., *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid History and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1989), 307, has "*firanghi* and *khatai* designs." Of course, for the Khorasani traveler the use of paintings in a sacred building was also a mark of infidelity. But, as I shall discuss later, this did not detract from his admiration for the products of civility. The Timurid tradition of illustrated books in the fifteenth century had refined the cosmopolitan synthesis under the Mongol Ilkhans of Tabriz, but ʿAbd al-Razzaq was obviously aware of where the ultimate roots of the pictorial art were.

[24] "Hi nos Francos appellant, aïuntque, cum caeteras gentes coecas vocent, se duobus occulis, nos unico esse, superiores existimantes se esse prudentia." Poggio Bracciolini, *Opera Omnia*, 4 vols. (Turin: Erasmo, 1964–9) 2, 648. There is no specific reference to Cathay, but elsewhere in the narrative Conti makes it clear that Cathay in "further India" represents the equivalent of Italian cities, the highest point in a world system of civilizations.

nor the way he interviewed Conti to compose a completely original and remarkably non-fabulous account of India, supports the possibility of textual borrowing.[25] In fact we should observe in the parallel passages that the use of alternative words follows a rationale which supports the idea of independent reporting. While Hayton talks about 'Latins' (himself being an oriental Christian concerned with finding help in the West in order to fight the Mamluks) and Mandeville transforms this into 'Christians' in general (which fits the author's purpose of challenging the moral coherence of Latin Christendom in his time), "Clavijo," Conti, and Barbaro in the fifteenth century all talk about 'Franks.'[26] This last is the name that would have been used by a medieval Muslim when referring indiscriminately to Latin Christians, as opposed to Eastern Orthodox ones. It is clear that in the case of Barbaro this mediation is completely justified by the narrative, where it is always a 'Tartar' or a Turco-Persian lord who tells the story (and who also keeps the anachronistic concept of Cathay, not China, in circulation).[27] The narrative of Clavijo's embassy, in which the report takes place in Samarqand, can be read in the same way. Similarly, in his very long travels, Conti was often

[25] If Poggio Bracciolini, when preparing his Latin composition from notes taken during his interviews with Conti, had had recourse to the report of Hayton (and most likely its Latin version), he would not have spoken about *Francos* instead of *Latini*, *caeteras gentes* instead of *alias nationes*; he would not have felt the need to change the order of the sentence; and he would not have transformed the verbs *dicunt* and *asserunt* into *apellant* and *vocent*. Waldemar Sensburg, "Poggio Bracciolini und Nicolo de Conti in ihrer Bedeutung für die Geographie des Renaissancezeitalters," *Mitteilungen der K.K. geographischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, 49 (1906): 257–372, whose judgment was accepted by Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, v. 1 *The Century of Discovery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 60, assumed that Bracciolini incorporated material from all the authors he may have known, without understanding that the humanist writer may not have intended to do so. This is why his arguments tracing classical and medieval parallels in the fourth book of *De Varietate Fortunae* are flawed.

[26] Barbaro knew about Conti and Mandeville, since he mentioned their names in the first paragraphs of his *Viaggi*. However, narrative context and logic do not support the idea that he might have borrowed the proverb or any other material. In fact, the narratives by Clavijo, Conti, and Barbaro all have independent structures, convey original information, and fail to include material present in those earlier texts which conceivably could have served as models.

[27] Barbaro was open about the fact that he had never been to "Cim e Macim" (South China) or to "Cataio" (North China), but he nevertheless summarized the reports of the "Tartar" ambassador describing a vast and populated country where the people, who are idolaters, produce porcelain, jewels and silk, and where justice rules with remarkable success. He concluded his account of Cathay: "questa terra è di libertà et di gran iustitia." See Barbaro, "Viaggio" (1545), 43r-44r.

in contact with Muslim merchants: according to the Andalusian traveler, Pero Tafur, he had prospered under the protective shadow of Timur's court in the early fifteenth century, and converted to Islam under the Mamluks of Egypt thirty years later.[28]

What is interesting about Bracciolini's version is that it was produced by an outstanding humanist reading classical geography and history. This, in effect, constituted a novel intellectual context of reception. As I have discussed elsewhere, through his India narrative Bracciolini developed Conti's 'popular' view of cultural diversity into a more elaborate set of assumptions concerning civilization. It was not the now well-trodden (and, as I have shown, not uniquely European) idea of hierarchy of civilizations which Bracciolini needed to create, but rather a new language by which Roman *prudentia* replaced Hayton's *sotil entendement*, and a clear typological opposition between the barbarous and the civilized subsumed the medieval admiration for foreign artistic skills as the basic criterion for the ranking of peoples. Conti's model for "Cathay" (in what he calls "further India") is a substantial account of what constitutes a civilized society, as it "excels the others [parts of India] in riches, politeness and magnificence, and is equal to our own country in the style of life and in civilization."[29] Another passage declares that in the land of Cathay "the houses and palaces and other ornaments are similar to those in Italy; the men are gentle, discreet and wise, and more wealthy than any that have been mentioned before."[30] For Conti, this superior part of "India" (by which the whole of Asia east of Persia is meant) is opposed to the barbarian society of Java, Sumatra and the islands of modern Indonesia. There the customs are brutal (*moribus asperi*), the men are cruel and inhuman, life is cheap, and the basest desires can be legally satisfied. In sum, the laws, which in Europe were understood as essential to defining civil order, are either defective or non-existent.[31]

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[28] As I discussed in my *Travel and Ethnology*, chapter 3, Pero Tafur's account of Conti's travels is unreliable as a version of the Venetian's empirical observations and tends towards the fabulous, but his biographical information is not to be dismissed. If he is correct, Conti might have traveled to Samarqand at about the same time as Henry III's Castilian embassy.

[29] "The Travels of Nicolò Conti in the East," in *India in the Fifteenth Century*, ed., R.H. Major [separate pagination], 21.

[30] Ibid., 13–15.

[31] Ibid., 15–16. Conti divided India in three parts, following a usage common amongst Arab writers: the first India went from Persia to the Indus, central India

Hence what was rich, humane, civil, refined and similar to Europe (or at least part of it) was opposed to what seemed poor, cruel, barbarous, coarse, and different. Interestingly, this model does not involve the linguistic equivalent of the modern concept of civilization, which is an Enlightenment construction based on a late Renaissance noun (civility) and adjective (civilized).[32] The actual expression used by Poggio Bracciolini to claim that Chinese 'civility' was equal to fifteenth-century Italy's is: *vita et civili consuetudine nobis aequalis* (equal to us in manner of life and civil customs).[33] It is however clear to me that the notion of civilization was implicit in this phrase, and indeed, that it was being developed through the actual ethnographic practice of travelers and their writers (these were two distinct roles, as many medieval narratives of travel were dictated rather than simply written). What distinguished Bracciolini's use is the entirely secular character of his analysis. There had existed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries an elite ethnography of exotic societies written in Latin by university-educated clerics, which culminated in the ambassadorial reports of the Mongols by the Franciscans John of Piano Carpini (who witnessed the enthronement of Güyük Khan in Qaraqorum in 1246) and William of Rubruck (who travelled to Qaraqorum at the time of his successor Möngke Khan in 1253–4).[34] However, the status of these two friars as ambassadors was ambiguous, since they were

(with India proper) from the Indus to the Ganges, and the third part included anything beyond the Ganges. However, in his more detailed analysis of particular regions this West-East division was confusingly overlaid by another classification that followed a North-South axis, and which was based on levels of civility: the territory of "further India" beyond Burma, that is Cathay, is superior to all others and equal to Europe, "central India" (India proper, best represented by the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagara) stands in the middle as an idolatrous civilization, whilst the peoples of modern Indonesia, in the extreme confines of central India towards the East, are cruel and inhuman. Since Poggio Bracciolini took notes as he interviewed Conti, asking many questions, sometimes the observations relating to different parts of 'India' got mixed up.

[32] One of the early uses is attested by the French historian Sieur de la Popelinière, who in a letter of 1604 to Justus Scaliger wrote of his interest in comparing "peuples civilisez et ceux qu'on appelle assez improprement sauvages." See *Epistres françoises des personnages illustres et doctes à M. Joseph Juste de la Scala* (Amsterdam: Harderwyck, 1624), 303–7. The noun had also appeared in English, for example Thomas Harriot in 1588 talked about how the natural inhabitants of Virginia might in short time be "brought to civilitie." See *A Briefe and True report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt: John Wechel at Theodore de Bry, 1590), 25.

[33] Poggio Bracciolini, *Opera Omnia*, II, 641.

[34] I discuss some of these early ethnographies, from Gerald of Wales to Marco Polo, in *Travel and Ethnology*, 41–5.

also missionaries, and their frankly negative judgement of the Mongols inevitably mixed religious and secular criteria. There had also existed a slightly more recent non-religious vernacular ethnography of the peoples of Asia, well represented from Marco Polo in the late thirteenth century to Iosafa Barbaro in the mid fifteenth. However, none of these popular authors—often merchant-adventurers acting as ambassadors—had the authority to engage with religion at the highest level. It is interesting that Marco Polo's most audacious comments—his praise for the pagan king Kubilai Khan, or the gentile saint Buddha—suggested a limited form of cultural relativism, which some of the manuscript versions tended to modify through the routine condemnation of idolatry, or altogether to edit out.[35] What humanism gave Poggio Bracciolini was an antiquarian perspective by which the analysis of civilization and barbarism became entirely secular and freed from the need to subject itself to a more authoritative religious discourse.

The Portuguese humanist historian João de Barros (1496–1570), when reporting the proverb of the three eyes in the sixteenth century, made clear the connection between the civil achievements of China and those of ancient Greece and Rome:

> And in the same way as the Greeks thought that in respect of themselves all other nations were barbarian, similarly the Chinese say that they have two eyes of understanding concerning all things, and that we Europeans, after they have communicated with us, have one eye, and that all other nations are blind. And truly, whoever sees the manner of their religion, their sacred temples, their men of religion living in convents, their way of praying day and night, their fasts, their sacrifices, their universities, where all the sciences, natural and moral, are learnt, their manner of giving degrees for each of these disciplines, and the precautions they take to avoid bribery, and the fact that they have printed letters which are much older than ours, and above all the government of their commonwealth, and the mechanical arts they use for works of metal, clay, wood, cloth and silk: he will see that these gentiles have all those things for which Greeks and Latins are praised.[36]

[35] Many of the more daring passages found in the obscure Latin manuscript classified as 'Z' (a version of which was used by Ramusio in the sixteenth century) are absent from the more abundant manuscripts written in popular vernaculars, from the expensive copies written in courtly French, or from the influential Latin version prepared by friar Pipino.

[36] Barros, *Terceira Década da Ásia* (Lisbon: Joam de Barreira, 1563), 46r, "E bem como os Gregos, em respecto de sy, tôdallas outras nações aviam por bárbaras, assi os Chins dizem que elles tenem dous olhos de intendimento acerca de tôdallas cousas, e

Barros, who devoted a whole chapter of the third of his Asian *Décadas* (1563) to the description of China, was one of the best informed of early armchair orientalists. He never visited the East, but for this discussion he is known to have consulted Chinese books (which he translated with the help of a Chinese slave) as well as Portuguese accounts and classical sources.[37] His statement is immediately remarkable because he has changed "Franks" to "Europeans" and because "Cathay" has become "China." More significant is the fact that he gave a fuller understanding of the elements that defined civilization (without needing the word) than any of his late medieval predecessors, setting the Chinese next to the ancient Greeks and Romans as the supreme model. In this way he consolidated the association of the proverb with a positive appreciation for China as the most civilized kingdom of the world, an attitude which would persist in Europe until the eighteenth century.

By tracing the story of the proverb of the three eyes of the world we have been able to establish the hypothesis that there existed a cross-cultural idea of civilization, one which, however, was limited in its analytical power. Furthermore, Conti's encounter with Poggio Bracciolini suggests that it was the influence of humanism that from the fifteenth century led in Europe to a more developed ethnography of civilization, with reference to classical models and theories. However, does the analysis of oriental material—that is, ambassadorial reports produced by writers from a variety of non-European backgrounds—support these conclusions? Although we do not have any record of what Timur's envoy to the court of Henry III of Castile observed, we fortunately have a number of other ambassadorial reports produced within oriental traditions which are contextually comparable to the European material we have been considering.

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nós os da Europa, depois que nos comunicaram, temos um olho, e tôdallas outras nações sam çegas. E verdadeiramente quem vir o modo de sua religião, os templos desta sua sanctidade, os religiosos que residem em conventos, o modo de rezar de dia e de noyte, seu jejum, seus sacrifiçios, os estudos gerães onde se aprende toda ciençia, natural e moral, a maneira de dar os gráos de cada una ciençia destas, e as cautellas que tem pera nam aver sobornações, e terem impressam de letra muyto mais antiga que nós, e sobrisso o governo de sua repubrica, a mechânica de toda obra de metal, de barro, de páo, de pano, de seda: averá que neste gentio estam tôdallas cousas de que sam louvados Gregos e Latinos."

[37] On Barros and his sources of information see Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, 1, 190-91; and, especially, Charles R. Boxer, *João de Barros. Portuguese Humanist and Historian of Asia* (New Delhi: Xavier Centre of Historical Research, 1981).

Already in the late thirteenth century a Turkish (Onggud) monk from northern China who was also a Nestorian Christian, Rabban Sauma, produced an account of his journey from Tabriz to Europe on behalf of the Mongol Ilkhan of Persia, Arghun (r. 1284–91), which has been preserved (albeit abridged) in a Syriac version. Closer to Clavijo's embassy, the regime of Timur's eldest son and principal heir Shahrukh, with its capital Herat (in Khorasan, south from Samarqand), produced a number of fascinating narratives of journeys to China and India in the first half of the fifteenth century. We also have contemporary accounts by the 'Cathayans' themselves, ambassadors from Ming China describing Herat. My aim here in comparing these sources will be to consider whether the notion of civilization, as it existed in the late Middle Ages, functioned differently in each of these cultures as revealed by ethnographic practice. This analysis of course will oblige us to consider in some more detail the role of religion in determining attitudes, both concepts of civilization and contexts of diplomacy.

'Abd al-Razzaq's Embassy to South India: A Muslim Ethnography?

One narrative produced in Persia under the rule of Timur's son and principal successor deserves extended attention, both for its intrinsic literary quality and for its suitability for comparison with contemporary European texts. By contrast with the rather pedestrian and impersonal description of Clavijo's embassy, it reveals itself to be the product of a sophisticated mind. The personal account of the Indian embassy of 'Abd al-Razzaq Ibn Ishaq Samarqandi (Herat, 1413-1482) was included in his historical account of the reign of Shahrukh, the youngest son of Timur and one of the successors of his unstable empire.[38] During his reign Shahrukh Bahadur (r. 1405–47) attempted

[38] For my analysis I will rely on English and French translations of this text. The first important translation (French text facing the Persian text) was produced by Étienne Marc Quatremère as *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Biblothèque du Roi*, XIV, I (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1843). Quatremère's text was in turn the basis for the influential English version edited in 1858 by R.H. Major, "Narrative of the journey of Abd-er-Razzak," in *India in the Fifteenth Century* (with separate pagination). A slightly different text, of which I shall also take account, was published by H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, eds., *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, 7 vols. (London: Trübner and Co. 1867–1877), 4: 80-126. However, Quatremère deserves priority: he seems to have worked with an earlier copy (which he dates 1494, while Dowson only mentions a 1601 copy for his revision) and he did not

to bring some peace and coherence to the Persian lands conquered by his father, following a logical pattern in Iranian history by which nomadic invaders eventually sought to consolidate their dominion by forging alliances with local elites, selectively adopting their religion, court culture, literary language and methods of administration.[39] Timur's authority, however, had been highly personal, and the various relatives and emirs who succeeded him, still semi-nomadic, never fully overcame their factional disunity throughout the fifteenth century. Nevertheless, Shahrukh was a remarkably peaceful man compared with his father, and he tried to learn about his subjects and bring order among the military. Timur's empire had been based on plunder; Shahrukh moved his court to Herat, stabilized the exaction of revenues, and ensured the safety of traders in order to encourage a prosperous economy. Part of the political role of the court consisted also in accommodating the surviving original urban elites and their culture, and protecting artists, jurists and chroniclers.[40] In the context of this cultural renewal the two main inspirations were necessarily a glorification of the power of the king and his men, and a defense of the Muslim religion which provided a common link between the invaders and many of the invaded.[41] It was from this religious basis that law and morality were recovered and reinterpreted, and that

introduce as many suppressions. The more recent translation by Wheeler M. Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, 299–321, confirms the general reliability of earlier versions but is more complete. I have used this for my quotations, comparing and sometimes noting differences with the versions published by Quatremère and by Dowson. I am grateful to Wahid Behmardi, formerly at the Faculty of Oriental Studies in Cambridge University, who kindly agreed to check a number of passages from Quatremère's translation against the Persian original.

[39] The methods used by Timur to consolidate his power in the Persianized lands which he had conquered are discussed in detail by Beatrice Forbes Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). These areas had been previously ruled by Mongol dynasties and often contained a mixed settled population.

[40] On Shahrukh see H.R. Roemer, "The Successors of Timur," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, v. 6, *Timurid and Safavid Periods*, eds., Peter Jackson and James Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986): 98–146. See also now, Beatrice Forbes Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), which appeared as this article was being edited for the press.

[41] Over the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Mongols had adopted the language of their nomadic subjects and the religion of their settled ones. Manz, "*Rise and rule*," 3, defines the cultural synthesis thus created: "The spoken language of this new culture was Turkic, its religion Islam and its political legitimation Mongolian." The Timurids imposed a Turco-Mongolian military elite, supported by a subject Muslim Persian bureaucracy, over an ethnically and religiously diverse population.

literary genres were developed within an accepted Islamic tradition.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq was a judge involved in diplomacy, government, and counseling who wrote poetry and some historical works. His father, a Persian from the city of Samarqand, had already served Shahrukh as a *qadi* (judge) and *imam* (leader of prayers), in the army and at court. He was therefore a member of the educated native Persian bureaucracy that provided Timur and his successors with specialized religious and administrative services. After his father's death ʿAbd al-Razzaq joined Shahrukh's court in Herat (1437), and sought to attract the attention of the king by dedicating literary works to him, beginning with a commentary on an Arabic grammatical treatise.[42] The dedication of such erudite works, and public disputations, clearly had a symbolic dimension in which personal talent, cultural orthodoxy, and political fidelity were three variables of a complex game of politics and patronage. On this occasion ʿAbd al-Razzaq won the approval of the assembly of court *ulama* (religious scholars).[43] Subsequently he received the patronage of the king and was entrusted with several political missions, most importantly as an ambassador to the South Indian kingdom of Vijayanagara (1442-44) and subsequently to the Caspian province Gilan (1447). Since he was an experienced ambassador and an intelligent man-of-letters, after the death of Shahrukh in 1447 ʿAbd al-Razzaq was able to enter the service of several of his successors, performing a variety of functions such as overseeing taxation. Finally, in 1463 and during the reign of Abu Saʿid (r. 1451–69), he retired from court life, apparently because he did not have the full confidence of the sultan, becoming instead religious master (*shaykh*) in a sufi hospice (*khānaqāh*) founded by Shahrukh in Herat. In this religious retirement he wrote his major historical work.[44]

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[42] ʿAbd al-Razzaq may have grown up at the court of Baysunghur in Herat, who predeceased his father Shahrukh in 1433 [837 AH], and whose patronage of the arts and sense of justice ʿAbd al-Razzaq later praised. On Timurid patronage of the arts, see Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, eds., *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 1989), and Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny, eds., *Timurid Art and Culture. Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

[43] In 1439 he was under attack and had to prove again that he was truly learned in a public disputation.

[44] On ʿAbd al-Razzaq and his work see the introduction by Quatremère to his French edition, "Notice de l'ouvrage Persan qui a pour titre Matla-assadeïn ou-majma-

The extent of the historical works which were written or encouraged by the Timurid dynasties shows that, like the Mongol Ilkhans a century earlier, they were particularly self-conscious about a glorious family tradition in which military success and kingship were central themes. ʿAbd al-Razzaq's chronicle, *Maṭlaʿ-i saʿdayn u majmaʿ-i baḥrayn* (The dawn of the two auspicious planets and the meeting of the two seas) told the history of the Turco-Mongol dynasties that dominated Persia in chronological order, from the birth of the last Ilkhanid ruler Abu Saʿid (1304) to the death of his homonym Sultan Abu Saʿid in ʿAbd al-Razzaq's own days (1470).[45] Despite covering the whole extent of the former Mongol empire in Iran, the work mainly focused on the two great political figures Timur and Shahrukh. For the former he relied on previous works, especially the *Majmaʿ al-tawārīkh* of Hafiz-i Abru (which runs up to 1427). Thus ʿAbd al-Razzaq was clearly writing within a tradition of chronicles sponsored by kings, a form of dynastic propaganda in which each new author summarized the earlier records and added material relating to his own times.[46] He was logically most original in those parts of the chronicle dealing with episodes directly known by him or not covered by previous authors, and he is considered a major source for the reign of Shahrukh.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq's originality comes across in particular in his first-person account of the embassy to Vijayanagara, an independent composition obviously written with different interests and constraints, and only subsequently incorporated into the main narrative. One could argue that the very genre of travel narratives, as opposed to general geography, lent itself to more personal and original writing, as the development of the *riḥla* in Spain and Morocco after the

albahreïn," in *Notices et Extraits* (1843): 1-13. See also the biographical article by W. Barthold and M. Shafi, in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new edition (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 1: 90-91; Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902–1924), 3: 428-30; C.A. Storey, *Persian Literature: a Bio-Bibliographical Survey* (London: Luzac, 1927) 1: 293-98; *Encyclopedia Iranica*, 1: 158–60; Jackson and Lockhart, eds., *Timurid and Safavid Periods*, 138, 166, 924.

[45] The work was therefore completed c. 1470.

[46] Hafiz-i Abru, on the orders of Shahrukh, had edited the world history of Rashid al-Din, the Mongol Ghazan Khan's vizier, and also continued a famous history of Timur by Nizamuddin Shami, the *Ẓafarnāma* (Book of Triumph) of 1404. The historiographic project supported by Shahrukh and pursued by Hafiz-i Abru (and, we might add, completed by ʿAbd al-Razzaq) could in fact be considered a self-conscious revival of the Mongol Ilkhanid tradition sponsored by Rashid al-Din. See John Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 46, 2 (1987): 81–108.

twelfth century suggests. The written *riḥla*, as exemplified in the works of Abu Hamid from Granada (1080–1169), Ibn Yubayr from Valencia (1145–1217), and most famously the Moroccan Ibn Battuta (1304–1368), had emerged in the context of an existing variety of Arabic geographical literature, and reflected the pressure of Christian advance in Western Europe, which increased the need to maintain a continuous flow of knowledge from the central lands of Islam to the western Muslim kingdoms.[47] The *riḥla* often included at its heart a ritual pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥajj*), but was conceived much more broadly as an extended pilgrimage of knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*), a quest which was understood as an act of religious piety but also became a professional qualification for jurists and ulama.[48] In its most extreme version, the account by Ibn Battuta, the traveler explored the furthest limits of *dār al-Islām*. In the Eastern Islamic context of the Timurid courts of the fifteenth century a more practical genre of travel narrative seems to have developed, one mainly associated with embassies to China, which probably acted as a model for ʿAbd-al-Razzaq for his Indian journey.[49] Indeed his chronicle includes such a report of an expedition to China, which ʿAbd al-Razzaq summarized from the

[47] For a general perspective, see B. Blachère and H. Darmaun, *Extraits des principaux Geographes Arabes du Moyen Ages* (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1957). It is important to note that a great deal of *riḥla* (travel), already understood as a search for religious knowledge, took place before the literary genre evolved in the twelfth century, as attested by many biographical collections from various parts of Islam.

[48] On the *riḥla* as religious writing see Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, eds., *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration and the Religious Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), of which the article by Sam I. Gellens, "The Search for Knowledge in Medieval Muslim Societies: a Comparative Approach," 50–65, is of particular importance. See also Houari Touati, *Islam et voyage au Moyen Age. Histoire et anthropologie d'unes pratiques lettrées* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2000).

[49] As Sam Gellens, ibid., 63, noted, scholars from Khorasan also traveled for knowledge, but without the sense of urgency one finds in Spain, hence the *riḥla* did not develop as an equivalent genre of 'the periphery' looking for 'the center.' An important precedent of the *riḥla* which, atypically, originated from eastern Islam, was the account of his journey from Nishapur to Cairo and then Mecca by the eleventh-century Persian philosopher Nasir-i Khusraw (1004–1072), but he was an Ismaili, attracted by the Fatimid rulers of Egypt. For a preliminary discussion of the wider corpus of Indo-Persian travel accounts (*Safarnāma*) written in the early modern period, and which ʿAbd al-Razzaq's narrative in some ways inaugurated, see Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam "From an Ocean of Wonders. Mahmud bin Amir Wali Balkhi and his Indian Travels 1625–1631," in *Récits de Voyage des Asiatiques. Genres, Mentalités, conception de l'Espace*, ed., Claudine Salmon (Paris: École Française d'Extreme-Orient, 1996): 161–89. See also now, Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), which only appeared as this article was being edited for the press.

account written by Ghiyathuddin Naqqash for the court of Shahrukh.[50] The practical and largely unconventional nature of these accounts meant that the subject-matter could be approached more directly and openly than was usual in the Persian literature of this period, although this does not mean that the texts dealing with the embassies lacked elaboration.[51]

For a Persian traveler like ʿAbd al-Razzaq, who as a member of a political and cultural elite must have been aware of a tradition of historiography in which both 'Hindustan' in general and 'Malibar,' 'Maabar,' and 'Ceylon' in particular were recurrent scenarios, the journey to Calicut was not an experience without the advantage of

[50] ʿAbd al-Razzaq copied this narrative from Hafiz-i Abru. The narrative of this embassy to China was to become famous in the Orient, being translated from Persian into Turkish and even reaching publication in French in 1696. This French translation had been prepared by Antoine Galland (1646-1751), an early orientalist chiefly known for producing the first European version of the *Arabian Nights*.

[51] Quatremère's obvious weakness as translator was a nineteenth-century resistance to the aesthetic preference for ingenious metaphors and to the poetic expressions of Persian literature of the fifteenth century, which he tried to eliminate so as to uncover a factual narrative. The more recent translation by Thackston, which contains all those deleted passages, makes it possible to see that the use of Persian literary conventions (allegories, exaggerations, emphatic and poetic descriptions, and insertion of religious verses) serves a purpose, revealed by the structure of the entire narrative. This suggests that the traditional view that Persian literature under the Timurids was characterized by "a decadent cult of an affected artificiality" is perhaps reductionist. This traditional approach is exemplified by Jan Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, ed., K. Jahn (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968), 281. Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 5, explains the evolution of Persian literary style from the fourteenth-century Ilkhanids to the fifteenth-century Timurids as an attempt to find a less intricate language. While the earlier writers introduced specialized Arabic words into a complex Persian prose, the latter sought a simple prose "studded" with poetic imagery, rhythm, and verse. That effect, an elaborated simplicity intended to transmit an elegant sumptuousness, he goes on to characterize as equal to the figurative arts of the time, especially book illumination. This could serve to describe the literary conventions which prevail in the work of ʿAbd al-Razzaq. In the context of the Timurid imperial idea, and in particular Shahrukh's patronage of historical writing, this style was not a mere anecdote, but seen as "indispensable." The tension between artificiality and originality has traditionally been seen by critics as central to the Persian literature of the Timurid period. Although ʿAbd al-Razzaq did cultivate a highly elaborate poetic style, he is also considered as a reliable source for the events of his period. It is to be noted that literary Persian was a *lingua franca* for the educated classes in the Timurid period, but the military aristocracy, the patrons, spoke Chaghatay Turkish, while on the other hand many local Iranian dialects generally differed from the written language. Although courtly Persian was the preferred vehicle for poetry, history, and the humanities, with literary Turkish modelled upon it, Arabic remained an important language for science and religion.

a previous cultural map.[52] And yet there was a need to negotiate the original implications of his narrative, because as an ambassador he traveled neither as a conqueror (who could order an Indian king to convert to Islam, pay a ransom, or be put to death) nor as a merchant able to settle and prosper in India (for example as a horse trader, like many others whom he met in India).[53] Neither could he write with the detachment of a court geographer, simply assuming a conventional view of universal empire.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq's account of his journey to Vijayanagara fulfilled several related purposes. It was, to begin with, a self-conscious liter-

[52] ʿAbd al-Razzaq could avail himself of an important tradition of geographical works in Arabic and Persian. On Persian geographers in the Timurid period see Storey, *Persian Literature*, and F. Tauler, "Learned literature from its beginnings up to the end of the 18th century," in J. Rypka, *A History of Iranian Literature,* 460–3. As I noted earlier (n. 15), Rashid al-Din's world history from Adam to 1304, included chapters on Jews, Chinese, Franks, Indians, and Turks. It has often been remarked that this breadth of coverage corresponds with the cosmopolitanism of the Mongol conquerors who commissioned the work, and that in fact accounts of other peoples came as a reflection of the history of the Mongols themselves. This provided nevertheless an important basis for future Persian historians, creating a tradition which, through Hafiz-i Abru, reached ʿAbd al-Razzaq (Hafiz-i Abru's 1414 work on geography followed Rashid al-Din's). What is significant is that in this kind of literature, as in the *Riḥla* of Ibn Battuta, there was room for the development of descriptions of diverse customs and laws, and for the systematic examination of other religions. This examination could go as far as the recognition that Hindu religious texts could ultimately be read as monotheistic, in opposition to the more popular 'idolatrous' practices and beliefs of the Indian population. This possibility is impressively attested in al-Biruni's exceptional *Kitāb al-Hind*, a systematic work on Indian thought, religion and society composed around 1030, in Arabic, by a Persian from Khwarizm who had to work (as a hostage-scholar) in the court of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. Rashid al-Din not only used al-Biruni's work for his chapters on the history and geography of India, he also attempted to give a summary of Hindu mythology, and he interviewed a Lama from Kashmir who informed him about Buddhism. See Karl Jahn, *Rashid al-Din's 'History of India'* (The Hague: Mouton, 1965), xcii–ci, who notes, xcvii, that, "the Hindu gods are described by al-Biruni from a Brahman point of view, and by Rashid al-Din, in so far as he adheres to [the Kashmirani Lama] Kamalashri, from a Buddhist one." This latter life of the Buddha, "Shakamana," was later copied and illustrated in Timurid Persia, at the court of Shahrukh. The only apparent effort to reconcile this tale with Islam, attempted by Rashid al-Din, or by his informer, consists in placing the Buddha among the prophets, in a move no less ingenuous than Marco Polo's when he claimed that "Sakyamuni" would have been a saint among Christians (Marco Polo, *Il Milione*, ed., Luigi Foscolo Benedetto (Florence: Olschki, 1928), 194).

[53] This was precisely the dilemma with which the Hoysala king of South India, Vira Ballala III, had been presented by the Turkish conqueror Malik Kafur in 1311: "he was sent with the object of converting him to Muhammadism, or of making him a *dhimmi* and subject to pay tax, or of slaying him, if neither of these terms were assented to." See, Amir Khushraw's, *Tarikh-i ʿalai*, in Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, 3, 89.

ary recreation of a personal experience, written in order to (as he declared) give pleasure to his friends and find credit among intelligent and important people. It therefore followed a strategy of self-justification and self-advancement. On the other hand, it was also supposed to be informative to the Turco-Persian rulers who employed him. In effect, the truthfulness of a common-sense empirical description functioned rhetorically as currency for the author's self-advancement. The information had nevertheless to be presented with elegance, and the author's talent (perhaps his greatest one) consisted in adapting literary conventions without distorting the empirical account. This is borne out by the way the key descriptive material was placed within the more general framework of a journey to and from India by sea. ʿAbd al-Razzaq elaborated these two framing passages poetically, with reference to religious themes. The encounter with the dangers of the sea, in particular, offered room for free digressions, rich in imagery, on the cosmic order, human frailty, and the relationship between fortune and faith, including numerous quotations from the poetry of Hafiz (c. 1320–89) and Amir Khusrau Dehlavi (1253–1325). Within the description of India, other occasions similarly prompted poetic digressions.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq was aware that 'truthfulness' was an important consideration:

> The narrative shall be given in its smallest details, and I shall insert in it all sorts of marvellous facts and wonderful matters worthy of notice. I shall set forth all the circumstances which have fallen under my notice in the space of three years; I shall recount, fully and in detail, all my adventures [my biography], and the dangers by which they have been rendered remarkable; and I shall also relate, in my usual manner, those events which affect the provinces of Khorasan...[54]

Adjectives such as "marvellous" and "wonderful" should not mislead us into thinking that ʿAbd al-Razzaq was only interested in the monstrous and bizarre. He was mainly referring to what is different and worthy of notice, a similar attitude to the one we found among late medieval European travelers like Marco Polo or Nicolò Conti. The writer took for granted that such differences occurred in the general,

[54] "Narrative of Abd-er-Razzak," in Major, ed., *India*, 1. This introductory passage is not translated by Thackston. Although ʿAbd al-Razzaq often interrupts the narrative of his journey and refers back to events in Persia, in strict chronological order, all English translations select passages of the journey to create a continuous narrative. I will of course restrict my commentary to this travel narrative.

possibly universal, framework of a cosmic order ruled by a divine will. What he really wanted to report was a collection of particularities structured around his own adventurous journey to India. The logical assumptions of the natural world as an ordered one, and of history as a succession of events following an irreversible arrow of time, sustained ʿAbd al-Razzaq's empirical description no less than those of any European writer. He combined this empiricism with a religious reflection related to his own subjective experiences—of beauty and success, but also of tedium and dangers. Thus, on the one hand, nothing goes according to men's desires because "the measures adopted by men are all fallacious."[55] Providence is a manifestation of the will of the creator, whose wisdom is reflected in all natural things, and faith consists in accepting, without losing heart, misfortunes that the limited understanding of men cannot make sense of. On the other hand, there is both a connection and a duality between divine power and personal curiosity for the things of the world:

> I saw plainly manifestation of great power in the verse, *His also are the ships, carrying their sails aloft in the sea, like mountains*. From time to time I listened to strange tales and marvellous stories from those with me, and these gave rest to my spirit.[56]

ʿAbd al-Razzaq's empirical curiosity underpins, I would suggest, a hidden purpose. The description of Vijayanagara was ideologically biased towards an idea of kingship which presented ʿAbd al-Razzaq's political message to his Persian contemporaries. But in order to achieve this objective, the author had to recognize among the people of India the same political ideals he desired for his countrymen; implicitly, he needed to transcend a traditional classification of peoples based on the simple opposition between Muslims and infidels. He relied instead on the neutral idea of unity, a sufi (and neo-Platonic) concept which was also the driving force in ʿAbd al-Razzaq's ideology. The metaphysical unity of God was mirrored by the institutional unification of power relationships in human society. The

[55] Major, ed., *India*, 4. Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 229, translates: "all machinations are erroneous." This seems a quotation from the poet Anwari. For details on these borrowings see the notes to the Persian edition: ʿAbd al-Razzāq ibn Ishāq Samarqandī, *Maṭlaʿ-i saʿdayn u majmaʿ-i baḥrayn*, ed., Muḥammad Shafīʿ, v. 2 (Lahore: Gīlānī , 1946–9).

[56] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 317. Italics here represent a quotation from the Koran.

ideal of justice, which in fact is one of the main motifs in ʿAbd al-Razzaq's historical account of Timurid Persia, becomes more personally and creatively grounded in the travelogue section, through the process of decoding an alien culture. Exploiting the dramatic possibilities of the journey narrative, this bold recreation of political ideals in the land of the infidels is placed in the context of an experience of personal frailty in the dangerous passages by sea, from Persia to the foreign land and back. In effect, the use of a complex literary rhetoric expresses a personal response to the unstable and dramatic circumstances of Persia in the Timurid period, in the combined languages of poetry, religion, politics, and common-sense description.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq reaches his central theme progressively, through a sequence of dramatic contrasts, the first of which is built around the journey itself. He left for India in 1442 (845 AH) at the age of twenty-nine, accompanied by his elder brother. Because the authorities of Hormuz—the main Persian port in the Gulf—had delayed the departure, the ambassador missed the monsoon. After a miserable attempt to sail (while on board ʿAbd al-Razzaq had immediately fallen sea-sick), the party was forced to disembark in Muscat, where the traveller fell into depression. His poetry—here quoting Hafiz—expresses a refusal to travel, in effect a rhetorical topos with interesting parallels in the European tradition:

> In memory of friends and homeland I weep so bitterly that I obliterate from the world all tracks of my passage. I am from the region of the beloved [Muhammad], not from a foreign realm. O Ever-Vigilant, return me to my companions.[57]

Because of the excessive heat, ʿAbd al-Razzaq and his companions fell seriously ill, in an atmosphere that suggested the fire of hell. The only solution was to commend themselves to the will of God. This "cruel fate" lasted four months, during which his brother died.

[57] Ibid., 301. Quatremère's translation (432) interprets that the poet would "obliterate from the world the taste for and custom of travelling" (je ferais perdre au monde entier le goût et l'habitude des voyages). For an interesting European classical parallel consider Horace, *Odes*, I, 3, built around the opposition between land and sea. The Portuguese travel writer Fernao Mendes Pinto took up the theme in the sixteenth century: "Most of the men who seek their livelihood at sea find their graves at sea. And that is why, my friends, the best and the surest thing for a man to do is to value the earth more highly, and to labor on the earth, since it pleased God to create us out of earth." Rebecca Catz, ed., *The Travels of Mendes Pinto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 177.

Finally, ʿAbd al-Razzaq set sail and, like Moses in his childhood, "found life" when everything seemed to point towards death.

The king and people of Calicut made a poor impression on the Khorasani traveler. There was a Muslim community in the city, but this was a land of infidels (*dār al-ḥarb*). The Muslims were dressed with some magnificence, but the Hindus were all naked, even the king.[58] ʿAbd al-Razzaq could not conceive of finding the black native women attractive. Although he liked the honesty of the inhabitants and the facilities of commerce (which, in the exchange culture of the Indian Ocean, were important requirements), he found the customs of the natives repugnant. The caste system exemplified this: "Although all share the same polytheism and idolatry, every tribe [*qauum*] has a different system."[59] He distinguished the obvious peculiarities of Hinduism, namely the existence of several castes (*qauum*), the prohibition against killing cows, and, in the case of the group to which the king belonged (the *nayars*), he remarked that laws of succession and inheritance went through female lineage and that many men shared the same woman in turn. In effect, he noticed similar 'strange' customs to those recorded by the European travelers Ludovico de Varthema and Duarte Barbosa sixty and seventy years later.[60] In ʿAbd al-Razzaq's account, however, these customs are interpreted in a uniformly negative manner, through a rhetoric of alienation which serves to create a contrast with the ambassador's later experience of Vijayanagara.

This rhetorical contrast actually dominates the narrative. Thus, while in Calicut the presents brought from Persia were not properly appreciated, and the ambassador was neglected, in Vijayanagara he was well received and favoured by the king. While Calicut was only a sea-port, Vijayanagara was an impressive kingdom with "three hundred ports, each as large as Calicut."[61] Although the ruler of Calicut, the Zamorin, was formally independent from the king of

[58] As Philip Wagoner argued, "'Sultan among Hindu Kings:' Dress, Titles and the Islamicization of Hindu Culture at Vijayanagara," *Journal of Asian Studies* 55 (1996): 853–61, dress code was significant in the context of the progressive cultural (but not religious) "Islamicization" of a number of southern Indian Hindu courts, especially Vijayanagara.

[59] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 305. *Qauum* might also be translated as 'sect' or 'nation.'

[60] Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, chapters 4 and 6.

[61] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 305–6.

Vijayanagara, "he was still in great awe of him."[62] The prostitutes of Vijayanagara (no longer described as black) surpass all description, and its temples of idols, in their elaborate richness and beauty, have no equal in the universe. Furthermore, the king obtains power after violent succession (as in Timurid Iran), and not because he is the son of the last king's sister. Justice in Vijayanagara is not just a matter of fair trade and security, as in Calicut; the kingdom actually becomes a model of good government, to be imitated by the "fortunate Khaqan" to which the report of the ambassador is being offered. In fact, if the embassy failed to bear more fruit it is because the author was betrayed by envious Muslim merchants from Hormuz. Corruption, as it turns out, originates from the home world. Thus, in a sophisticated rhetorical move, the periphery has become the center, and the targets of conversion have become teachers of justice.[63]

This dramatic structure has of course an aim, which is to justify ʿAbd al-Razzaq's performance as an ambassador. His original destination was not Vijayanagara, but rather the kingdom of Calicut, where he was expected to impress the local ruler with the greatness of Shahrukh and win him over to the Muslim faith. The mission was in reality a response to a previous embassy from Calicut to Persia; the Zamorin of the gentile kingdom, having heard of Shahrukh's influence over Indian sultans (we are told that the Timurid king had recently protected the ruler of Bengal from the sultan of Jawnpur), had requested an embassy, perhaps seeking to secure protection against the Deccani sultans. It is unlikely that the Zamorin's motives were religious—any ideas of conversion to Islam would rather have been promoted by the powerful Muslim merchants of the city of Calicut—but the fact of Shahrukh's nominal overlordship (as Timur's successor) over the kingdoms which sprang up after the collapse of the sultanate of Delhi could not be disregarded.[64] A Turkish dynasty

[62] Ibid., 305.

[63] The utopian transformation of foreign societies—especially at the extreme of the known world—is a frequent theme in the literary elaboration of travel narratives of different times and cultures. Although the tendency finds most clear expression in fictional works, it also makes a considerable impact upon empirical ethnographies. For a classic analysis in terms of 'self' and 'other' see Michel de Certeau's interpretation of the narrative of the voyage of the French Protestant Jean de Léry to Brazil in 1556-8: "Ethno-Graphy: Speech, or the Space of the Other: Jean de Léry," in *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), ch. 5.

[64] The contemporary writer Bikhamadkhani portrayed Shahrukh as formal overlord and arbiter of politics in India, receiving tribute from the sultans of Delhi and sending

created by Timur, the Sayyid dynasty, albeit a weak one, was still ruling in Delhi, and generally speaking the various Muslim sultanates that governed most of India in the fifteenth century were dependant upon a constant inflow of Turkish and Afghan 'foreign' soldiers who occupied important positions at court and in the army. In the other courts of the Deccan, Persian cultural models were fundamental, and even Hindu Vijayanagara to some extent sought to compete, militarily but also symbolically, in the world of courtly Islamicate civilization.[65] ʿAbd al-Razzaq's mission was therefore a test of the power of Timur's heir to play a political and cultural role in India from his capital at Herat, according to the idea of universal empire traditionally entertained by many Asian monarchies and adopted by the Mongols. The project also had an economic side, because Calicut and Hormuz were two of the most important trading links between India and Persia.

Not surprisingly ʿAbd al-Razzaq failed to convert the Zamorin, and learnt that the expectations created by the Muslim emissary who had represented Calicut to Shahrukh were wholly unrealistic. But when Devaraya II (d. c. 1446) from Vijayanagara, on his own initiative, sent for him, the ambassador found a chance to adopt an alternative and altogether more impressive plan, even if that required departing from his original instructions. (This departure needed justification; in the narrative Shahrukh appears in a prophetic dream to tell ʿAbd al-Razzaq, who is still languishing in Calicut, not to remain distressed. Following the dream, ʿAbd al-Razzaq hears from the king of Vijayanagara). This improvised embassy becomes the key theme of the narrative. Unfortunately, ʿAbd al-Razzaq missed the opportunity to obtain clear results in the great city of victory, because his credentials as a legitimate ambassador were doubted. In his report, while conveying as much accurate practical information as he thought was useful, he also struggles to turn his failure into a relative success.

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in exchange banners and robes of honor. See Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate. A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), 322. A few years earlier, the Bahmani sultan Firuz (1397–1422) had sent ambassadors to Timur (following Timur's sacking of Delhi), accepting his implicit overlordship. As the historian Firishta reports, Firuz also maintained a continuous flow of exchanges with the Persian Gulf, importing great numbers of Iranian soldiers, artisans, men of learning and administrators. The Deccani sultanate thus competed with the Delhi sultanate as an engine for the Islamicization of Indian court cultures.

[65] Wagoner, "Sultan among Hindu Kings," developing Marshall Hodgson's suggestive model of an Islamicate civilization extending beyond religious definitions.

The mere fact that he had survived all dangers and returned after three years is, in his eyes, already remarkable. More significantly, the image of *justice* which the writer represents in the Hindu kingdom is not only a symbol of the importance of the destination he has reached unexpectedly, but also a model of behaviour for his own king, the Khaqan, who should punish envious courtiers (such as those who questioned the ambassador) and reward good services (starting, of course, with ʿAbd al-Razzaq's).

The fact that a single narrative combines informative and apologetic aims explains the emphasis with which the kingdom of Vijayanagara is decoded, rather than just invented, as a system of justice and power. The emphatic selection of information and its literary elaboration are perfectly compatible with a fundamental reliance on the language of a common-sense description of natural and social realities. This is already obvious as the ambassador approaches Vijayanagara by land; every particular location deserves a descriptive observation which carries its emphasis. Thus the temple of idols near Mangalore has no equal in the world.[66] The traveler encounters cities and towns "every day," and a mountain "whose towering peak could be a scabbard around Mars' neck," at its foot a dark and impenetrable forest.[67] This is the way to Vijayanagara, but it could well serve to introduce any fictional tale of initiation and adventure. At the town of "Pednur" (possibly Belour, the old Hoysala capital) the women and the houses "were like unto the houris and palaces of paradise."[68] Here again there is a temple of idols of ineffable beauty—"no description could do it justice"—which ʿAbd al-Razzaq nevertheless describes with relish.[69]

To build his theme ʿAbd al-Razzaq relies on two main ideas: first, a continuous comparison with famous historical and mythical places known to his audience, usually to the advantage of Vijayanagara, stretching from his home-town of Herat to the fabulous gardens of the earthly paradise. The image of paradise had a particular legitimacy in a journey from Persia to South India, because in Arab and Persian geography Ceylon was the land actually closest to paradise, with a mountain made by God for Adam's descent (his foot-mark was still there) so that the wretched world would not receive an "excessive

[66] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 306.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] From the description one might venture that it was the twelfth-century Channakeshava temple.

shock" elsewhere.[70] (Of course, as the Sinhalese understood it, this Adam's foot of Muslims and Christians was the footprint left by Buddha). In addition, ʿAbd al-Razzaq develops the traditional metaphor of heaven and earth, a pervasive literary and mystical image with Neo-Platonic undertones; hence the platform of a garden surrounding the temple which stands in the middle of the town of Pednur, is "made of beautifully dressed stone, the blocks so expertly and delicately set one on another, that one might think it was of a single block—or a piece of blue firmament having appeared upon the carpet of the inhabited quarter of the globe."[71] Interestingly, ʿAbd al-Razzaq needs to remind his audience from time to time, if only briefly, that any devotional exercises performed there are "unacceptable," yet insists on the fact that the magnificence of music, rituals and art has an aesthetic quality which is in its essence divine.[72] His description of the temple thus dwells on its size and location, or the quantity and craftsmanship of the sculptures and paintings, while avoiding interpreting the actual figures, which would necessarily lead him to an idolatrous mythology. He therefore insists on artistic skill and wealth as expressions of something ineffable. This emphasis is not incompatible with acknowledging the social and economic dimensions of the temple: "All the men of the village have duties to perform there, and votive offerings are brought there from distant cities. In the belief of these infidels, it is the Kaʿba of the idolaters [*guebres*]."[73]

Probably it was his exposure to sufism that made it possible for ʿAbd al-Razzaq to write admiringly of the "Kaʿba of the guebres," evoking an image of paradise. His reliance on poetry—secular or religious—to illuminate the significance of many of the events of the journey was more than mere literary convention, it also offered a framework for its interpretation as a learning experience. In particular, the conventions of sufi mystic poetry often gave a positive meaning to travel

[70] The idea is explained by the Ilkhanid historian Wassaf, noted for his rhetorical elaboration, who also conventionally described India as the most pleasant quarter of the world. See Elliot and Dowson, eds., *History of India*, 3: 28–9. In the same period the Franciscan missionary John of Marignolli, who attached great spiritual significance to his accidental visit to Ceylon, similarly took the geographical proximity to paradise seriously.

[71] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 306.

[72] Ibid., 307.

[73] Ibid.

as a metaphor of a spiritual journey.[74] More radically, because of their spiritual universalism, sufi literary themes also offered a legitimate strategy for the selective assimilation of the idolatrous other as something more than the merely devilish infidel: beyond any appearances, the real source of all idols was the ego.[75] ʿAbd al-Razzaq's general reluctance to travel—justified perhaps by the fact that his passage to India from Hormuz had been a dramatic ordeal, and his experience in Calicut clearly disappointing—could therefore be reconstructed as overcoming a kind of test, often expressed in the idiom of Providentialist piety. In ʿAbd al Razzaq, however, the world of politics is never absent, and the lesson learnt not simply a spiritual longing for 'the land of the beloved.' Hence the adventure's outcome had an empirical content—a transfer of learning from an idealized infidel court to a problematic (albeit Muslim) home court. It is at this crucial point that the daring imagery of sufi poetry could provide an inspiration. As ʿAyn al-Qudat Hamadani (d. 1132) had once written, "If there is a sign of the beloved in the idol-temple, circling the Kaʿba is quite unreasonable."[76]

This pattern of interpretation is valid for the kingdom and city of Vijayanagara, with the emphasis above all on their magnificence:

> I saw that it was a city of enormous magnitude and population, with a king of perfect rule and hegemony whose kingdom stretched from the borders of Serendip to the province of Gulbarga, and from the borders of Bengal to the region of Malibar, more than a thousand leagues. Most of his regions were flourishing, and he possessed around three hundred ports. He had more than a thousand elephants with bodies large as

[74] Farid al-Din Attar's (d.1221) famous *Conference of the Birds*, for example, offered an extended allegory of spiritual purification, whilst one of Rumi's (1207–73) celebrated ghazals presented a series of key Muslim prophetic figures—Joseph, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad—as model travelers, of course all in order to invite the disciple to travel 'away from the self' too.

[75] As defined by Rumi, *Mathnavī*, I, 772. For a good discussion see William C. Chittick, *Sufism. A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000).

[76] The poem continues: "Without the Beloved's scent, the Kaʿba is just a house of idols; but with the Friend's perfume, an idol temple is our Kaʿba." *Love's Alchemy. Poems from the Sufi Tradition*, eds., David and Sabrineh Fideler (Novato, California: New World Library, 2006), 50. For an explanation of idolatry as a positive image of devotion, see Carl W. Ernst, *The Shambhala Guide to Sufism* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997), 157–8. It is reasonable to assume that ʿAbd al-Razzaq was familiar with many of these sufi poets, although in the context of the journey he tends to quote non-religious literary descriptions (but not the radical sufi martyr Hamadani).

> mountains and miens like demons, and eleven lacs of soldiers (1,100,000).[77]

The insistence on giving particular measures and numbers only adds to the fabulous aura of the journey, and thus to the honor of the shah's ambassador. The thematic emphases—a large city in a large empire, a powerful king, a well cultivated and fertile land, a vast army with awesome elephants—are almost identical with those offered by Italian and Portuguese observers, from Nicolò Conti in the 1420s to the horse traders Domingos Paes and Fernão Nunes a century later. Of course, while the Europeans established comparisons with Rome or Lisbon, ʿAbd al-Razzaq referred to Herat, the Khorasani capital. He also introduced a theme which was particularly relevant to the traditions of political discourse at the Persian courts: an idealized model of monarchical rule with a powerful king who surrounded himself with wise advisors, was able to command full authority, and fostered collective prosperity. We may suspect here that the travel narrative is verging towards the fabulous and moralistic. In effect the next passage suggests this quite explicitly, by introducing the *Kalila and Dimna*, a famous collection of fables about animals widely read throughout the Middle Ages by Hindus, Muslims and Christians:

> In all of Hindustan there was no *ray* (raja) more absolute than he. The kings of those areas are called *ray*. In his presence the Brahmins have great status. The stories of the book *Kalila and Dimna*, which is the most eloquently expressed book that has come into the Persian language, and which narrates of a *ray* and a Brahmin, are indeed a product of the wisdom of that kingdom's learned men.[78]

The *Kalila and Dimna*, in its various forms, was perhaps the most genuine trans-cultural political work of the Middle Ages, providing a set of moral-political examples for courtly life.[79] ʿAbd al-Razzaq's

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[77] Ibid. Quatremère, ed., *Notices et Extraits*, 445, translates: "il vit une place extrêmement vaste et peuplée, un roi qui possède au plus haut point la grandeur et la souveraineté."

[78] Ibid., 307 (with some stylistic corrections). Thackston defines the *ray* as "autocratic" (*khwudrāi*) but in English this has negative connotations which I doubt are meant. I have therefore adopted "absolute," the term offered in their translations by Elliott and Dowson, eds., *History of India*, 4:105, and by Major, "Narrative of the Journey," 23 (following Quatremère's French).

[79] It reached Islamic Persian literature through the eighth-century Arabic version of Ibn al-Muqaffa (who, paradoxically, himself a Persian, had actually translated it from Persian Pahlavi, not Sanskrit). This Arabic text spawned Syriac, Greek, Persian and, in

identification of the provenance of this prestigious collection from Vijayanagara is not merely a way of expressing the importance of that kingdom in particular, but more significantly it legitimizes very powerfully the idea, implicit in his travel narrative, that fifteenth-century (Muslim) Turks and Persians could learn politics from Vijayanagara (Figs. 2.1, 2.2).[80] Moreover, it is easy to see in the wise and virtuous brahmin a replica of the Persian judge or *qadi*, who should be listened to and honored by the king. In a court culture where books of advice were a well-established genre, this was of course a common claim, although from an external perspective the implication that good counsel alone could bring peace and end factional struggle among aristocratic groups might seem rather idealistic.[81]

Both convention and intention combined in encouraging ʿAbd al-Razzaq to overlook the real dynamics of power struggle in Vijayanagara, in which largely independent military leaders and regional chiefs could challenge the central authority of the kings.[82] On the other hand, ʿAbd al-Razzaq could draw effective support for his ideas from the very symbolism of religious and civic ritual in Vijayanagara. Interested in an analogous Persian 'language-game'—namely the system of cultural and political life at the court of Shahrukh in Herat—he decoded Vijayanagara to fit his own purpo-

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the West, Spanish and Latin versions. Although there were vernacular versions in Spain, directly from the Arabic, as early as the thirteenth century, the main thirteenth-century Latin version followed the Hebrew. For the influence of the *Kalila and Dimna* in the medieval West see Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe,* v. 2 , book 2 (1977), 105–7.

[80] The Arabic version, following the Pahlavi, made the Indian origins of the book a prominent part of the story, and the episode of the book's acquisition in India remained popular in Persian literature. That the *Kalīla wa Dimna* was highly appreciated in the Persian courts of the Timurid period is also attested by some of the excellent manuscripts with miniature paintings illustrating this text (two sponsored by Baysunghur and produced in Herat, dated 1429 and 1431, have survived). It obviously occupied a special place among the classics of secular literature at the Timurid court in Herat, together with the *Shahnāma* of Ferdowsi, the *Khamsa* of Nizami and the *Jamīʿ al-tawārīkh* of Rashid al-Din. On the Timurid albums, see David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album 1400–1600. From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005).

[81] There are various examples of advice literature in the Timurid courts. Jalal al-Din al-Qayini, one of the earliest scholars appointed to Shahrukh's *khanqah* in Herat (the institution where ʿAbd al-Razzaq would eventually retire) composed a book of advice for Shahrukh between 1411 and 1417. A few years later Nizami ʿAruzi Samarqandi's, 'Four discourses' on true kingship (originally twelfth century) were also copied and illustrated in Herat.

[82] This is perhaps the central thesis of Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

ses. What emerges from this decoding is the equivalent of a notion of 'civilization,' constituted by urban magnificence, artistic skills and political justice. It is a notion that assumes, but also develops, the concepts of civilization, law, and kingship of Arab and Persian political thinkers, by which (for example) the lawgiver (*sāhib-i nāmūs*) and the ruler (*hākim*) create and enforce the restraints that make civil life (*tamaddun*) possible.[83] 'Abd al-Razzaq's notion of civilization does not oppose religious values, in fact it assumes a divine design. However, and this is the crucial point, the universality of this heavenly design is not de facto contained by the Muslim law or sharia.[84] That a gentile ruler could be offered as model of justice was something that a more conservative Muslim traveler, the Moroccan Ibn Battuta, would not readily acknowledge. For example, in his account of China, economic prosperity and good order were without equal, and Chinese artisans were the most skilled in the world, but the Chinese were, as idolaters, repulsive, and the traveler's only significant exchanges took place within the Muslim quarters of each city, that is within an Islamic community of learning and piety constituted by qadis (judges), shaykhs, lords, and principal merchants.[85]

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[83] Dawani, *The Practical Philosophy of the Muhammedan People*, trans., W.F. Thompson (London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1839). For a discussion see Erwin Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), 210–23, who notes that the same concepts are used by Ibn Khaldun. Jalal al-Din al-Dawani (1426–1502), a few years younger than 'Abd al-Razzaq, was an eclectic writer active in Fars and Shiraz who popularized Muslim philosophy for a more practical audience. He dedicated his chief political treatise *Akhlāq-e Jalālī* (Jalalean Ethics) to Uzun Hasan. The concept of *tamaddun* had been first developed by Dawani's source Nasir al-Din Tusi in the thirteenth century, on the basis of 'city' (*madīna*), in a way similar to the way in contemporary Europe 'civil life,' 'civility,' or 'civilized,' derived from the Latin *civitas*, and 'political' from the Greek *polis*. An equivalent concept is the Arabic *madanīya*. There is more than sheer convergence here: all these Islamic thinkers were strongly influenced by Plato, Aristotle, and some Hellenistic Stoic writers.

[84] By contrast, the North African Ibn Khaldun had not simply assumed but indeed made it clear that a political order based on rational laws (the Persian monarchy being a prime example) only aspired to worldly aims, that is a secular understanding of the common good, and was blameworthy. Only the divine guidance of prophetic law made it possible for civilization to fulfill human potential. Hence a caliph was more than just a monarch. (Because the caliphal leadership had declined, Muslim sultans and urban ulama could also be corrupt, but that is a separate question). Similarly, for Dawani (and in contrast with his source Nasir al-Din Tusi), the ruler was specifically concerned with Muslim sharia as a revealed law, rather than any abstract philosophical law.

[85] Ibn Battuta, *Travels*, 4, 888–909, famously noted, "China, for all its magnificence, did not please me. I was deeply depressed by the prevalence of infidelity and

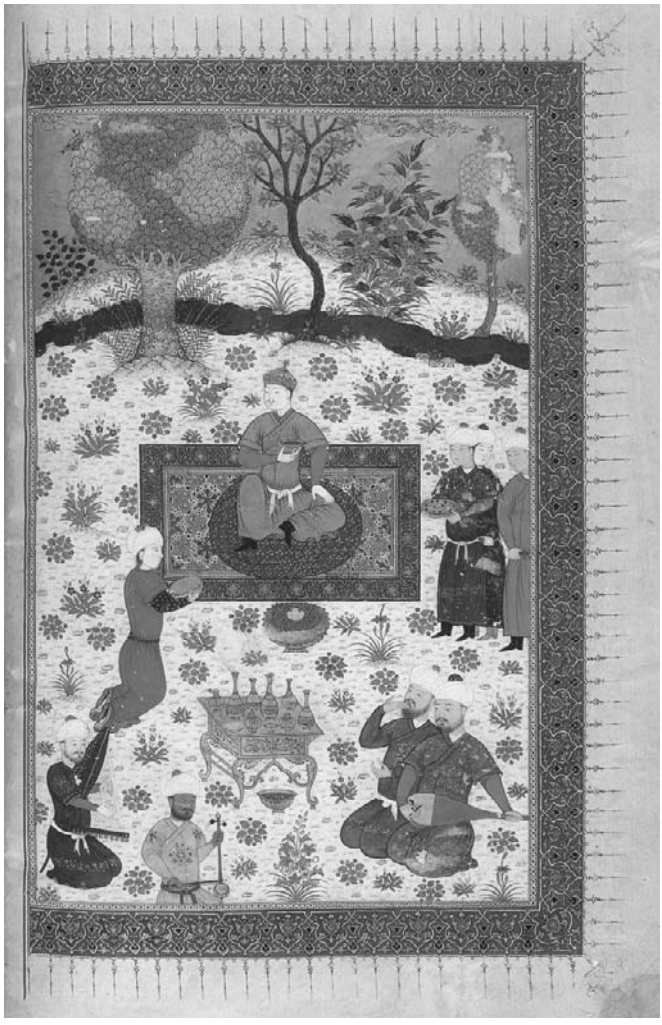

Fig. 2.1. Prince Baysunghur, son of Shahrukh, seated in a garden. Frontispiece to a copy of the *Kalīla wa Dimna* completed in Herat, AH Muharram 830 (AD October 1429) by Shamsuddin Baysunghuri. Topkapı Saray Library, R.1022, fol. 4. Courtesy of Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, Istanbul. Baysunghur, who died shortly after, was a great cultural patron and came to be thought of very highly by the literary elite of Timurid Khorasan, including the ambassador and historian ʿAbd al Razzaq. Although the garden setting is conventional and reflects an idealized image of Timurid kingship (in this case the prince is drinking wine), portraits of Baysunghur are remarkably personalized, and a particular scene might have been depicted here. This and other illuminated copies of the *Kalila and Dimna,* in effect a mirror-for-princes, might have been in ʿAbd al-Razzaq's mind when a few years later he described this book as "the most eloquently expressed book that has come into the Persian language" and "a product of the wisdom of the learned men" of the kingdom of Vijayanagara.

Fig. 2.2. The young Marco Polo with his father and uncle, acting as envoys for the pope, presenting a letter to the Great Khan. "Johannes," c. 1400, *Livre du Graunt Caam*. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, MS Bodley 264, 220r. 'Abd al Razzaq might have idealized the gentile ruler of Vijayanagara as a model of a just and absolute king in terms that made sense to his Turco-Persian audience; but Marco Polo had been equally admiring of Kubilai Khan, the Mongol ruler of China. This painting was one of a series produced in England to illustrate a manuscript of the *Livre du Graunt Caam* (a version of the *Divisament dou Monde*) and it obviously both idealizes and Europeanizes the foreign ruler. The artist was actually following the text of Marco Polo closely, but not having any drawings to work with it was almost inevitable that he would supply entirely European artistic conventions when representing a gentile king as a powerful and dignified figure. What is perhaps most striking is that the European image might have been entirely appreciated and understood across a number of intermittently connected courtly cultures. From Western Europe to Eastern Persia, often looking beyond towards India and China, courtly audiences valued sophisticated figurative paintings in important manuscripts, and sought images of exemplary royalty in a mythologized past or in foreign lands. These images were key elements in what we might call a cross-cultural language-game of courtly civilization that all but ignored religious definitions.

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when I left my lodging I saw many offensive things which distressed me so much that I stayed at home and went out only when it was necessary;" by contrast, "When I saw Muslims it was as though I had met my family and my relatives (900)." As Henry Yule, C.F. Beckingham, and other editors have noted, Ibn Battuta is likely to have made up part of or even all his Chinese journey, since his itinerary from Zaytun to both Canton and Hangz-hou in 1346 is chronologically impossible, and he makes many obvious geographical and ethnographic blunders. He probably derived his information about the countries east of India from hearsay.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq's remarkable act of cultural creativity was bold, because its target audience was the court of a monarch who sought distance from Central Asian pagan practices, and emphatically portrayed himself as a protector of sharia. It was also determined of course by his immediate agenda as an ambassador. Analogies between largely independent language-games allowed the traveler to adapt the signs of a symbolic landscape he half understood to the needs of another he wished to manipulate. In many ways, as I have argued elsewhere, European observers confronted Vijayanagara in a similar way, not only in acknowledging the physical reality of 'a city' (which was, of course, the logical starting point), but also in translating a number of indigenous cultural realities into their own terms.[86] One must of course exercise caution in defining the religious and political analogies upon which any cross-cultural analysis could take place. One example is the theme of divine kingship: however familiar the symbolic representation of royal power might have seemed to the Persian or European traveler in Vijayanagara, the specific themes of the political and religious thought which supported a theory of monarchical power were quite different in each tradition. Similarly, despite the existence of an aristocratic military ethos in all these societies, the mythological representations of each tradition—heroic figures like Iskandar (Alexander) in Persia, Saint George in Christian Europe, or Rama in India—also expressed these differences in subtle ways. The evidence from travelers suggests that these mythological representations—even when the same historical figure, for example Alexander, had been adapted to different cultural contexts—were seldom translated by a passing observer with a different religious background, and thus remained mutually unintelligible.[87]

Because it is very detailed, ʿAbd al-Razzaq's description of the city of Vijayanagara allows us to retrieve some specific elements of the encounter between Persian and Indian language-games. The city reconstructed by modern archaeologists was affected by important transformations in the sixteenth century, which seems to have meant an increase in its size and a significant addition of public works and independent city-temples, especially in the northern area, by the

[86] Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, 201–50.

[87] A further problem which limits the assumption that the symbolic representation of power could be 'translated' on the basis of cross-cultural analogies is the fact that we may be talking about very different kinds of state to begin with. On this see ibid., 30–4.

Tungabhadra river. The description of the Persian ambassador, however, mentions many specific buildings in a core area or "royal center," as well as a general pattern of social and political life, which essentially remained continuous.[88] Judging by the tenor of a variety of foreign descriptions, confirmed by important archaeological findings, Vijayanagara seems to have been expanded and rebuilt without a fundamental change in its basic conception.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq divides the city into a succession of seven citadels enclosed within each other and gives equivalents from his native city of Herat in order to convey the distances between them. The first citadel is surrounded by a massive round wall constructed of stone and lime and is on the summit of a mountain. The gates (on the north) are solid and well guarded. The description, which may have been found in any Persian fairy tale, conveys an impression of strength and order. It also has a clear center, the seventh citadel, which "is ten times the size of the market-place [*charsu*] in Herat, and that is the king's court."[89] While the area between the first and the second wall, according to ʿAbd al-Razzaq, is full of gardens and cultivated fields (an observation confirmed by modern archaeology), the space between the third and the seventh fortresses is identified as the urban center, with many shops and a bazaar. This urban center culminates at the gate of the royal palace complex, a space structured like "four bazaars situated opposite one another." These bazaars are broad and long, with numerous shops and "a lofty arch" above each. At this point one finds the main public buildings to which ʿAbd al-Razzaq devotes informed descriptions, omitting however any references to their possible religious character.

Although it is not my aim closely to scrutinize possible correspondences between texts and physical remains, it is important to note

[88] A.H. Longhurst, *Hampi Ruins Described and Illustrated* (Calcutta: Supt. Govt. Press, 1917), represents the traditional archaeological interpretation of the ruins of Vijayanagara, while John M. Fritz, George Michell, and M.S. Nagaraja Rao, *Where Kings and Gods Meet: The Royal Centre at Vijayanagara* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984), and in many subsequent publications, develop a risky but thoughtful alternative, based on analyzing the archaeological evidence from the perspective of the brahminic writings about sacred kingship, and indeed mapping a whole mythological landscape around the ruins. There is also a summary account in Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 31-9. More recent contributions include Anila Verghese, *Religious Traditions in Vijayanagara as Revealed through its Monuments* (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1995).

[89] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 308.

that the general pattern of the traveler's description may be recognized in archaeological reconstructions. The exact correspondence of these buildings with archaeological remains is however arguable, and some specific observations—such as the outer walls being made of lime as well as stone—have been challenged. Furthermore, the image of seven concentric citadels seems to be an idealization of the fact that the traveler crossed several guarded walls and enclosures as he advanced towards the central city-palace (the number seven is associated with perfection and paradise in traditional Islamic and Biblical literature).

ʿAbd al-Razzaq mentions several public buildings: first the king's palace, whose portico "is the tallest of all;" next to it the *dīwān-khāna* or council-house, which is extremely large and is shaped like a forty-pillared hall (*chihil sutūn*), and in front of it a secretarial office on a raised gallery, where the scribes sit.[90] Opposite one finds the *fīl-khāna*, or elephant stables. Behind the king's palace are the quarters of the "daiang," a "eunuch" who presides over the *dīwān* and administers justice (i.e. the vizier or prime minister, elsewhere translated as *danāik*, probably meaning *dhannāyak*, or commander of the army), and to the left the mint.[91] Opposite the mint (*zarrāb khāna*, probably a treasury) there is the house of the city-governor, with a strong guard of 12,000 soldiers, and behind it a long bazaar full of excellent prostitutes, from whose revenues the guard is paid.[92]

Each of these buildings has therefore a specific function, and the whole constitutes a system of justice and government. The description of the archives is accompanied by an explanation of the two kinds of writing practiced by the Indians, with an iron stylus on coconut leaves and, of a more lasting quality, by carving on painted

[90] ʿAbd al-Razzaq's concepts were of Persian origin, including the reference to the *Chihil Sutūn*. The *dīwān* was the key administrative institution in Timurid Khorasan. Staffed by a number of scribes or *viziers* (their head was the *sahib dīwān*), it was in charge of tax collection and fiscal supervision. The Chaghatai *dīwān*, on the other hand, a council composed by *amīr dīwāns*, was in charge of justice amongst the Turco-Mongol elites. For example, Shahrukh appointed his son Baysunghur head of this supreme council (*dīwān-i ʿalī-i amīrī*), which was then based in Herat. For the distinction, see Manz, *Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*, 167–8 (relying on chronicles like the *Ẓafarnāma*, and a genealogical source commissioned by Shahrukh in the 1420s but edited c. 1470).

[91] Thackston, ed.. *Century of Princes*, 308–9. The description is not always easy to follow, and I have compared Thackston's translation with the versions offered by Quatremère and Elliott.

[92] Ibid., 310.

stone. The mention of the mint is accompanied by a detailed description with the names and relative values of the various kinds of coins: of gold mixed with alloy (there are three types of these), of silver, and of copper. ʿAbd al-Razzaq also gives Persian equivalents, and notices which currency is most useful for transactions. He insists that all the gold from the kingdom has to be brought annually to this mint, and that all payments (for instance to soldiers) are made from this money, rather than from further assignments on the revenues of the provinces. This is a significant detail, since it expresses the political ideal (at least in ʿAbd al-Razzaq's mind) of concentrating coinage as a royal prerogative, with a centralized control of revenues.[93] Thus a ruler rich enough to pay his soldiers in cash will not need to make service dependent on land-grants. (The extent to which this was realistic is another matter).

There is however no better expression of the general character of the system interpreted by ʿAbd al-Razzaq than the description of the "daiang" (*dhannāyak*) administering justice.[94] In ʿAbd al-Razzaq's graphic image, this powerful minister sits alone at the center of the magnificent council-house, protected by armed guards. Anyone can go to him with his business and only needs to offer a small present, and the judgement is made "according to the rules that pass for

[93] Interestingly, during the difficult years following Timur's death Shahrukh had to struggle to consolidate his power in Khorasan, and was obliged to make extensive land grants (*soyurghals*) in order to win the support of his emirs. These grants implied tax immunities and were not seen as desirable by a member of the native administrative class that served the king, and who would chronicle those struggles.

[94] "*Daiang*" in Quatremère. The ministerial title of *dhannāyak*, often in the corrupt form of *dannāik*, deriving from the Sanskrit *dandanāyaka*, might be translated as "governor." It was not reserved for the city's chief royal officer, but was often used for the governors (very often brahmins) of various royal forts (*durga dannāik*). It probably needs to be distinguished from the related title of *nāyaka* used widely by those captains, usually of Telugu origins, who extended, through a number of military campaigns, the power of Vijayanagara kings in the eastern and southern provinces, and who eventually laboured to (in some cases) usurp the crown, or (after the collapse of imperial authority) to found a number of independent regional dynasties. That is, *nāyakas* were military leaders of peasant caste in a prebendal system of "captaincies," who sometimes assumed political power and deposed kings, while the administration of royal justice by *dannāiks* was often in the hands of brahmins. For a discussion of both concepts, see Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 403–12. Evidence of these titles from inscriptions is also discussed in Noboru Karashima, "Nayaka Rule in North and South Arcot Districts in South India During the Sixteenth Century," *Acta Asiatica* 48 (1985), 24.

justice in that kingdom."[95] No appeal is possible. When the minister leaves, he is accompanied by pomp and ceremony (trumpets and parasols of different colours), and on each side of him "eulogists utter benedictions."[96] He crosses the seven (they have to be seven) guarded doors that lead him to the king, and at each gate "one of the parasol-bearers stops." Alone, he reports to the king, "and after a time he comes out."[97]

It is clear that ʿAbd al-Razzaq, himself a *qadi* and advisor of kings, has placed the ruler in the hands of his minister of justice. This follows one of the central preoccupations of much of Muslim medieval political thought, and certainly *justice* constitutes the main theme running throughout the whole of ʿAbd al-Razzaq's own historical account of Timurid Persia, where it is mainly understood as a regulated relationship between the public administration and the lords of the kingdom: the king, as supreme arbiter, has to find out the truth and punish (or promote) individuals accordingly.[98] However, while in his historical narrative of Persia the author emphasized conflicts, and the meaning of 'what is just' changed according to each

[95] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 308. Translators other than Thackston do not convey any irony towards Indian justice in this passage, as he instead does.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid., 308–9. This number seven, so crucial to ʿAbd al-Razzaq, becomes nine in some European descriptions of the city written in the sixteenth century, for instance, in the Venetian Cesare Federici's description of the palace of Aravidu Tirumala Raja in 1566. In 1566 the city was in ruins after the sack of 1565, but the attempts (which would prove futile) to revive it began with the establishment of nine successive royal guards.

[98] The fundamental importance of the concept of justice in Persian political thought is well documented in the research of Anne K. Lambton, *Theory and Practice in Medieval Persian Government* (London: Ashgate Variorum Reprints, 1980). Lambton emphasizes the combination of religious concepts with Hellenistic and Sassanid models of royal power, and the repeated attempt to extend the breadth of political vision, for example by insisting that the maintenance of social order and the cultivation of a kind of civil manners (*adab*) were part of the upholding of justice. The distinctiveness of the Persian sources on the theme of justice is also emphasized by Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 158–61. From Nasir al-Din Tusi to Jalal al-Din Dawani, justice was understood as the core value that sustained civilization (*tamaddun*). ʿAbd al-Razzaq's work would seem to fit with the attempt of fifteenth-century jurists to educate Timurid rulers through advice literature. Although the point had already been made that kingship could survive unbelief more easily than injustice, the ambassador's re-creation of justice in Vijayanagara must be read as a rather bold proposal, given the difficulty of writing about the topic truly independently from religious discourse. For example, in Dawani's contemporary formulation, the balance of justice was also measured by sharia. In Vijayanagara ʿAbd al-Razzaq necessarily dispensed with this element, despite the fact that at home Shahrukh claimed to be a 'restorer' of sharia.

factional interest (often through opposition to the fiscal polices of 'vicious' prime ministers), in his description of Vijayanagara the ideal model could be presented without the cumbersome narrative of the continuous struggle to achieve peace and order.

'Abd al-Razzaq makes very explicit the link between the king's ability to pay a strong guard in the city, and thus guarantee safety, and the revenues that come from the highly organized and 'artistically dignified' prostitution of women:

> Any description of the elaborateness of their brothels or of the beauty, blandishments and attraction of their courtesans is beyond my ability to express. In short, "brevity will take the place of long-windedness." Behind the mint is a place shaped like a bazaar. Its length is more than three-hundred yards, and its width more than twenty yards. Along both sides are chambers... along both sides of the road are pictures of lions, leopards, tigers and other animals depicted with such movement and verisimilitude that one would think they were alive. In the evening chairs and seats are placed at the doors of the chambers, which are as clean as they can be, and there the prostitutes sit. Each is arrayed with costly pearls and jewels and fine clothing, they are quite young and extremely beautiful, and with each stand one or two serving girls. Ready for pleasure, revelry and enjoyment, they are willing to dally with anyone who enters and anyone they wish... there are many similar brothels in these seven walls, and from the taxation on all the brothels, twelve thousand *fanams*, the wages of the guards are paid.[99]

What is striking about this description is the way it portrays prostitution as part of a global institution in which sensual pleasure and artistic skill both contribute to the image of a perfect political society. In this well-ordered system public officers, properly paid from taxes on prostitution, can be made accountable for their responsibilities. Thus 'Abd al-Razzaq goes on to tell that when one of his companions had to deal with runaway slaves, the governor ordered that the guards should either find them or compensate for the loss, as with any other lost article. This public guarantee of social order and safety is seen as the mark of justice.

The royal-administrative complex is at the center of an urban core where order and justice visibly produce prosperity. The bazaars are full of flower merchants who sell sweet-smelling and fresh-looking roses; beauty is intrinsically valuable: "as necessary as they deem food to be, they [the people of Vijayanagara] cannot bear to be

[99] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 310.

without flowers." Of course, they sell all sorts of things, since "the practitioners of every craft have stalls adjacent to one another."[100] The ambassador, however, insists on the poetic celebration of the richest, most aesthetic and symbolic objects: "the jewellers sell pearls, diamonds, rubies and emeralds" (indeed, a whole page of poetic exclamations follows).[101] A system of canals and running streams makes the place very agreeable. The prosperity of the city is ultimately a symbol for the prosperity of the whole country, and extends to the whole of society: "The kingdom is so flourishing that any description would take long... All nobles and commoners of the region, even the craftsmen of the bazaar, wear pearls and jewels…"[102]

Through its aesthetic recreation, by means of poetry, the description, while keeping faithful to many (but not all) empirical observations, conveys a quasi-religious feeling: Vijayanagara suggests an image of paradise. Here the writer, as earlier in his description of the Hindu temple, refers to a topos in Persian miniature painting which crystallized precisely in this period, that is, the use of the paradisaical garden as the background to every subject, with the implication of "the Sufi sense of the immanence of the divine in the world of nature."[103] Through this process, however, ʿAbd al-Razzaq has also removed the grounds from which to judge the errors of the infidels by looking at their works. The stigma of idolatry is not of course denied, but it loses significance. This represents a literary assimilation, rather than acceptance, of religious and cultural diversity.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq's exaltation of the aesthetic expressions of an ideal system of power effectively substitutes for the religious mythology and political thought that underpinned the indigenous system. Not only does he ignore any explicit reference to the brahminical literature dealing with *dharma* (moral order) and *artha* (material gain) which informed Vijayanagara political thinking, but he also does not develop the mythological themes of the *Ramayana* on whose godly hero the Hindu kings mirrored their political action. He might not have known about these, although he was a well-educated traveler

[100] Ibid., 308.

[101] Ibid. Even Thackston omits to translate this passage, although Quatremère at least prints the Persian original.

[102] Ibid., 309.

[103] As defined by Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (Geneva: Albert Skira, 1961), 88.

and spent several months in the city. It is nevertheless striking that ʿAbd al-Razzaq fails to include any temples or religious leaders in his tale about the city-center in which the administration of the empire was conducted. He could not have missed them. In fact the *Ramachandra* temple in the middle of the city has been interpreted by modern archaeologists as the fundamental setting for the symbolic expression of the relationship between private and public spaces of kingship, and their eventual unification through contact with the sacred in the mythical figure of Rama, the perfect dharmic (that is, divinely lawful) king.[104] The celebration of the nine-day *mahānavamī* festival witnessed by ʿAbd al-Razzaq was also closely linked to this royal temple and its mythology, as it evoked Rama's propitiation of the goddess Durga before marching victoriously against the demon Ravana, suggesting of course that in a similar way the kings of Vijayanagara would gain victory against their demonized enemies (including the Central Asian cavalrymen serving the Muslim sultans of the Deccan). On all this, the traveler's silence is not likely to have been entirely innocent.

In his selective description of Vijayanagara in religiously neutral terms, the ambassador was helped by the fact that the secular architecture of the royal city—from baths to pavilions—was then being transformed by the introduction of Islamic models from the Deccan.[105] By contrast, a mosque built in 1439, at the time of ʿAbd al-Razzaq's visit, only used Indic models, and was conceived as a hall of *dharma*. As Philip Wagoner has argued, the Vijayanagara elites even switched

[104] Fritz, Michell, and Nagaraja Rao, *Where Kings and Gods Meet*, 150-1. The main shrine of the Ramachandra temple dates from the beginning of the fifteenth century, although additions were being made at the time of Krishna Devaraya a century later. It represented the first significant import (from the Tamil country) of the older Chola monumental style of architecture that would come to define the Vijayanagara period, a conscious 'revival' of an imperial style according to George Michell, "Revivalism as the Imperial Mode: Religious Architecture during the Vijayanagara Period," in *Perceptions of South Asian Visual Past*, eds., Catherine Asher and Thomas Metcalf (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994): 187–97. See also A.A. Dallapiccola, J.M. Fritz, G. Michell and S. Rajasekhara, *The Ramachandra Temple at Vijayanagara* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991). The Ramachandra temple's importance as a royal cultic center was accompanied by the identification of the landscape and hills around Vijayanagara with a number of key sites in the Ramayana epic. However, this did not by any means exclude other royal cults with powerful mythological associations, of which the oldest and most important was the Temple of Virupaksha (a manifestation of Shiva) by the Tungabhadra river.

[105] George Michell, *The Vijayanagara Courtly Style* (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1992).

to Islamicate garb when engaged in public political functions.[106] This remarkable separation, quite peculiar to Vijayanagara, between traditional 'Hindu' religious ritual and art and the adoption of 'Islamicate' models for military and administrative public functions, paved the way for 'Abd al-Razzaq's positive presentation of an infidel kingdom as civilized. The Persian ambassador avoided any explicit religious imagery in order to hide the basic incongruity of his whole literary exercise, his intention to mirror a heavenly, ideal, Platonic society—one not incompatible with Islam—in empirically-experienced heathen lands. There already existed in Persian culture an important model of heroic kingship which was not explicitly Muslim, in Ferdowsi's extremely popular epic poem *Shahnāma*; but to idealize pre-Muslim Iranian heroes was a poetic licence with an ethnic logic and a possible historical justification, something very different from the idealization of notorious idolaters who were at present at war with Muslim kings.

There are various indicators that this idealization is an intended rhetorical effect and, as a consequence, had a concrete empirical cost. To begin with, 'Abd al-Razzaq avoids describing in great detail the immediate historical setting of Deccani warfare, which could potentially be construed as a religious confrontation. Although the ambassador did mention the existence of a military conflict between the kings of Vijayanagara and the Bahmani dynasty of the Deccan, he did not dwell on the theme, and failed to express any sympathy for the Muslim, even Iranian, enemies of his hosts.[107] (This neglect should not be seen as evidence that religious distinctions in the politics of the region lacked importance.)[108] It is true that at the time the

[106] Wagoner, "Sultan among Hindu Kings."

[107] 'Abd al-Razzaq narrates that after an assassination attempt on king Devaraya II which claimed many of his ministers, the sultan of Gulbarga, Ala'uddin Ahmad-shah, requested tribute from Vijayanagara. This led the Hindu ruler to react with anger and embark on a military expedition, exclaiming: "whatever he can take of my kingdom he will consider booty and give to his sayyids and ulema, just as I will give whatever I can seize of his kingdom to the high castes (*zunnārdār*, lit. girdle wearers or dhimmis) and brahmins." Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 315. The ambassador, who was at court during that war, does not therefore hide the religious opposition, in fact the Bahmani Sultan claimed that if he was not paid he would overturn the kingdom's infidel (*kufr*) rule, but 'Abd al-Razzaq's rhetoric also equalizes the two sides politically.

[108] For a radical interpretation of the 'Islamicate' identity of Vijayanagara—following Philip Wagoner's lead—as it evolved in the sixteenth century under Rama Raja, see Richard Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan 1300–1761: Eight Indian Lives* (Cambridge:

rulers of Vijayanagara were not only competing with, but also in a number of ways imitating, the Muslim conquest-state of the Deccan. However, ʿAbd al-Razzaq does not emphasize the similarities either. Hence, he does not explain that the Vijayanagara ruler, Devaraya II (r.c.1424–c.1446), had introduced an elite body of Muslim cavalry men and archers into his army, including many native Khorasanis who had come to India after Timur's devastating expeditions; nor does he mention that the king had recently had a mosque built in Vijayanagara, obviously with the intention of keeping Muslim servants faithful to him.[109] He also failed to mention the fact that some Vijayanagara Muslims may have helped him to get along in the city. For ʿAbd al-Razzaq, neglecting to dwell on these issues was the logical counterpart to downplaying the fact that the Vijayanagara religious system was, however we might wish to qualify it, predominantly Hindu, committed to an 'infidel' sacred law.

By contrast, various passages of the travel narrative reveal ʿAbd al-Razzaq's interest in the inner workings of the institution of kingship. Even apparently trivial passages, like a long dissertation on elephant-breeding and hunting that immediately follows the description of the elephant stables, reflects this political concern: elephants were a symbol of royal power, as well as an element of peculiar importance in the armies of India (a fact consistently recognized in Muslim historical sources).[110] How the king is described is of course

Cambridge University Press, 2005). The new emphasis is also apparent in a recent synthesis by Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India before Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 70–4. It is however crucial to insist that Vijayanagara did not adopt Islamic religious culture, but only borrowed from an international 'Islamicate' culture specific military, artistic, and administrative technologies, and a number of customs, linked to 'secular' elite concerns. That the conflict with the Bahmani sultans was more political than religious is not to deny the distinct religious identity of Vijayanagara as 'Hindu' (using the modern term). Going further, we could here take up Daud Ali's suggestion that the cosmopolitan ecumene (largely Persianized) which made possible an international communicative practice through courtly activities like robing or banqueting, in fact extended from Byzantium to China and was not specifically Islamic. Daud Ali, *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 265–8.

[109] On Muslim mercenaries, see Mahomed Kasim Ferishta, *History of the Rise of Mahomedan Power in India till the Year AD 1612*, ed. and trans., John Briggs, 4 vols. (Calcutta: R. Cambray and Co., 1909–1910) 2, 431. Stein, *Vijayanagara*, 35, comments on the mosque built by Devaraya II in 1439. Firishta (ibid.) even mentions the public acceptance of the Koran. There was a separate Muslim quarter in the city, where the ambassador was probably lodged.

[110] Their subjection also illustrated the superiority of man over beast. It is important to emphasize that this concern with elephants was not mere curiosity for the exotic, as

no less significant. What is important here is the sense of magnificence associated with power: Devaraya is richly dressed in Chinese silk (obviously a cross-cultural symbol of status), tall and imposing, and of pleasant expression, albeit young and beardless. He might have been old, fat and bearded and yet could still have been portrayed in magnificence, of course—ʿAbd al-Razzaq's idealization did not entirely depend on his empirical observations. What mattered was the portrayal of royal dignity. This, in turn, was reflected on the ambassador as he was granted an audience, treated with favour, and given generous maintenance.

In a similar exemplary mode, the narrative of a failed attempt to assassinate the king—a typical threat to kingship—acts as model for a political crisis and for its successful resolution. The event, reported to have taken place when the ambassador was still in Calicut (November 1442–April 1443), is also mentioned in other sources, in particular the tradition collected by the Portuguese Fernão Nunes in the early 1530s. Exact identifications are however difficult, and there has been some argument about the exact chronology of the reign of Devaraya II on whom the attempt had been made, and who perhaps died a few months after the attack.[111] In any case ʿAbd al-Razzaq, having described the king, provides the story about a conspiracy in which his envious brother tried to replace him, organizing a massacre of lords and brahmins. The attempt took place during the absence of the king's faithful vizier, the "*daiang*," who was on a journey to the frontiers of Ceylon. The king was saved by a royal intuition after almost everyone else had been butchered. Although it is likely that the story the Persian visitor was told had already acquired a rhetorically charged form before he heard it, what is interesting for our purposes is the way he seeks to convey (through

they were not unknown in Khorasan (Clavijo had been shown some in Timur's Samarqand). It is true that their prominence in South India was remarkable. European travelers like Nicolò Conti and Ludovico de Varthema would also be drawn to the theme.

[111] Thackston ed., *Century of Princes*, 311–12. It can be compared with Quatremère, ed., *Notices et Extraits*, 456-8. The same story, but referring to a son of Devaraya II, is given by Fernão Nunes in his Portuguese *Chronicle of the Kings of Bisnaga* (c. 1531). See Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar)* (London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., 1900), 72–7, who discusses the problem. In fact, the date of the death of Devaraya II, usually given as 1446, is to my knowledge still uncertain, since some inscriptions seem to make his reign overlap with those of his successors. This probably reflects that the following years of dynastic succession were riven by internal struggle and antagonistic claims to authority.

drama and exaggeration) a general image of kingship, rather than the particular aspects of a particular reign. For ʿAbd al-Razzaq, the key facts are that the attack on the king failed, and that the perpetrators were harshly punished. Dynastic rivalries and court intrigues were a continuous source of instability not only in Vijayanagara, but also in Timurid lands (after his father's death, Shahrukh had had to struggle for many years against his emirs and his brothers in order to consolidate his rule in Khorasan and extend it to Transoxiana). It is therefore clear that the story was relevant to the general political message directed at a Persian audience.[112]

A final passage that reveals ʿAbd al-Razzaq's interest in kingship as a cross-cultural institution—and indeed, as a mark of civilization—is the detailed description of the *mahanadi* (i.e. *mahānavamī*) festival, which the ambassador claims to have witnessed during the full moon of November 1443.[113] This description is actually the climax of ʿAbd al-Razzaq's literary reconstruction of a system of symbolic power. In effect, the festival offers an elaborate image of orderly success. Again, there are some problems of historical identification, but these do not affect the understanding of the underlying meaning of the narrative.[114] This was a major royal feast, prepared every year by the infidels (*kuffār*) "in their pride and puissance."[115] The critical tone of the language is here somewhat misleading, since the description is full of praise and culminates with a celebration of the greatness of the king, who then grants a new audience to ʿAbd al-Razzaq. That audience, in turn, is portrayed as a diplomatic success.

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[112] In fact, in his chronicle ʿAbd al-Razzaq tells of the assassination attempt on Shahrukh perpetrated by Ahmad Lur in 1427. It is not unlikely that a literary echo was intended later in his description of the Indian episode.

[113] The manuscript edited by Elliot had *mahanawi*, but there is no doubt that all these names refer to the same root. Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 313, who tends to offer corrected readings of specific concepts, translates *mahanavami*.

[114] Thus, Robert Sewell, *Forgotten Empire*, 93, noticed that ʿAbd al-Razzaq was describing a three-day festival, shorter than the proper *Mahanavami* (i.e. nine days) festival, which, moreover, should have taken place a month earlier than he says. Sewell suggested that ʿAbd al-Razzaq actually described a New Year festival. In any case, his description suggests a similar spectacle to the one witnessed by the Portuguese Domingo Páes and Fernão Nunes some eighty years later; see a discussion in Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, 243–8.

[115] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 313, although he adopts the term "idolaters." Elliott, *History of India*, 4:117, translates "The infidels of this country, who are endowed with power, are fond of displaying their pride, pomp, power and glory."

The principal people from all the parts of the empire, including "wise brahmins" and "army commanders," present themselves in the palace with many elephants, richly adorned with colourful paintings, magnificent wooden castles, and armour.[116] ʿAbd al-Razzaq devotes considerable space to these elephants that, as I noted, symbolized the extent of royal power. Equally symbolic were the women. The king brings together both the best elephants and the prettiest women from the whole empire (he is said to have seven hundred wives and concubines, and each wife has a separate maintenance). The secular meaning of the feast is quite clearly the concentration of wealth and power in the imperial center.

The festival takes place in one great space where many multi-storied pavilions are erected, with the highest (of nine stories), as one would expect, representing royal power. These pavilions are covered from top to bottom with figures, which represent "every picture that could be imagined, of humans, beasts, birds, and all other animals, even flies and mosquitoes."[117] ʿAbd al-Razzaq is always impressed by figurative art, somewhat repressed in the Muslim tradition (but less so in Timurid Persia), and stops short of condemning it. He prefers to omit any religious reference and insists that "all were executed with precision and mastery." And in fact the main theme of his description is admiration for the skill with which all artistic performances are made: some of the pavilions "were made so that they revolved and every so often showed a different side," women play music and dance "in an astonishingly enchanting manner," storytellers sing and invent tales, jugglers "perform marvellous tricks," and elephants are made to do all kinds of extraordinary things.[118] During the three days, the king rewards the various artists with gold and rich clothes, while all kinds of fireworks and games take place around him (to the point that ʿAbd al-Razzaq declares it impossible to describe everything in full detail).

In this highly charged setting the author introduces his major audience with the king. This is an important moment, because it is meant to illustrate ʿAbd al-Razzaq's 'success' before he begins the painful explanation of his subsequent fall from grace. In an earlier meeting upon his arrival, the ambassador had offered gifts, in par-

[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid., 313–4.

ticular Persian horses, and his letter of credentials.[119] The king had treated him kindly and saw him regularly thereafter, always asking questions about "the fortunate Khaqan" (Shahrukh). The ambassador also received regular presents (he was especially pleased with *betel* leaves, which he described as having aphrodisiac properties). In this process of gift-giving, cultural differences are never presented as an obstacle for mutual understanding: thus the king gave ʿAbd al-Razzaq gold in place of an invitation to share a royal meal (which he knew to be customary among Muslim monarchs) because in his own tradition he had to eat apart. In his own words: "since you and I do not eat the same food, let this package of gold be the emissary's banquet."[120] Following from all these positive precedents, the audience at the end of the festival is the culmination of a good relationship, and exemplifies how the various agents practiced a kind of pragmatic relativism, based on a mutual understanding of power relationships and interests. The Castilian ambassador Clavijo, during his embassy to Timur, had had to negotiate greater difficulties with conviviality, as he (exceptionally for a Frank) did not drink wine. A 'custom' might easily be forgiven, a personal extravagance was more likely to be seen as an affront.[121]

A small exchange exemplifies the operations of this 'pragmatic relativism.' The ambassador, who commented that "there is no place on the face of the earth where they do gem-studding better than here" was challenged by one of the king's favorites to the effect that in his country "there could not be such a thing."[122] To this ʿAbd al-Razzaq replied that "in that country too such a thing could be made, but it is not our custom," an answer that pleased the king. Devaraya II, having already asked about the lords, troops, horses and cities under Shahrukh's authority, expressed sentiments of great friendship, and finally promised an embassy with elephants and eunuchs as a present. Gifts were, of course, assigned relative values, and, together with the terms of the letter and the quality of its mes-

[119] Given that Vijayanagara was not the original destination of the embassy, this might have been the letter of credentials originally intended for the Zamorin of Calicut, a slightly embarrassing detail.

[120] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 311.

[121] Clavijo, *Embajada* (1999), 272, 281. Timur only accepted Clavijo's excuse after long discussion: "E con el dicho Ruy Gonçales porfió una grand pieça por le fazer bever vino, ca no quería creer que nunca beviera vino." Conspicuous feasting in the camps was central to Chaghatai culture.

[122] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes,* 314.

senger, expressed the explicit commitments of different agents in a pact of friendship which was possible across religious antagonisms.

The exchanges reported by ʿAbd al-Razzaq, however idealized, reflect a basic practice of cross-cultural understanding amongst late medieval and early modern ambassadors. If we compare embassies ranging from China to Europe, we tend to find similar models of symbolic exchange. In other words, far from being a language shared only by the participants of one well defined cultural tradition, Christian Europeans for example, or Muslims, the symbolic exchange of gift-giving in a ceremonial setting actually constituted a universal mechanism for reaching an understanding beyond parochial assumptions. For such a practice to be successful, however, it was necessary that conventions be constantly identified and constantly created, and a precondition for this was a mutual desire to reach an agreement, such as the one exemplified by ʿAbd al-Razzaq. While in any cultural encounter mistakes could be made, they could also be corrected (ʿAbd al-Razzaq had to rely on an interpreter to talk to the king, but this was not necessarily a problem either). A local language might pose a challenge, but it could always be learnt. What mostly determined the outcome, in other words, was the context of political interaction, not the language employed.

ʿAbd al-Razzaq did not encounter excessive obstacles in ignoring, or at least pretending to ignore, a few things he was not supposed to like, nor in understanding many others that he was supposed to decipher to the advantage of his secular lord. Unfortunately, the eventual outcome was not so successful. In the absence of the "daiang" (*dhannāyak*), his protector, who was waging war against the Bahmani king of Gulbarga, several merchants from Hormuz, who controlled the sale of Persian horses to Vijayanagara, and who for some reason might have disliked the idea of an embassy from Devaraya to Shahrukh, spread the rumour that ʿAbd al-Razzaq was not a true emissary of the Timurid ruler, but only a merchant who had gotten hold of an ambassador's letter.[123] They were supported by one of the king's counselors, the daiang's deputy, a brahmin (a *zunnārdār*) called Hamba Nurir, who is described as the vilest of men

[123] The fact that he was originally sent to Calicut and not Vijayanagara might have weakened ʿAbd al-Razzaq's defense.

by ʿAbd al-Razzaq.[124] The king eventually declined to send a full embassy, although he dispatched a cautious letter with two Khorasanis from among those settled in Vijayanagara (this also meant that ʿAbd al-Razzaq had to be careful not to report anything that they could contradict, which may help to explain the ambassador's need to make use of his best literary skills to present his case in a favourable light).

Therefore ʿAbd al-Razzaq had to return home with more or less empty hands. Even then, he took back with him from the land of infidelity a positive image of kingship—the same one he had brought from Persia in the first place, one suspects. Going back to Devaraya's defiant reply to the sultan of Gulbarga after the assassination attempt, it did not matter that the king's servants had been killed, since the "sun" that gives light to "dust motes" was still shining. And true to this principle, even at the worse time of ʿAbd al-Razzaq's personal disgrace, "the king came across me several times on the street and drew his reins to inquire after my condition. Truly he was of exceptionally good qualities. "If he is all justice, it is enough."[125]

ʿAbd al-Razzaq's narrative of his journey to "Bidjanagar" was an extended metaphor about the role of the king as a symbol of the unity of power in a lawful state, thus interpreting kingship as the institution that makes government effective and the army successful, independently from the particular fortune of individual servants. This view, shared with different degrees of emphasis by the political ideologies of both Hindu and Muslim rulers, either in Persia or in India, clouded a fundamental weakness of the political systems in pre-industrial societies. The analysis of dynastic struggles in terms of the vices of human agents moved by passion and doomed to failure did not do full justice to the underlying contradictions that an empirical description, oriented differently, might have revealed. Content with the idea of an absolute ruler, ʿAbd al-Razzaq does not for example mention any serious conflict between royal power and the virtually independent status of many local chiefs and brahmins who controlled

[124] In Quatremère's garbled version he is called *Nimah-Pazir*. Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 315, following Elliot and Dowson, calls him Hamba Nurir. He is described as a *zunnārdār*, literally a girdle-bearer, a concept usually applied to a *dhimmi*, that is a non-Muslim (originally used for Jews and Christians, but soon also applied to Zoroastrians). The Persian historians of India often used the term *zunnārdār* to denote idolatrous brahmins, and Thackston interprets it freely as "a high-caste Hindu."

[125] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 315.

the provinces. This structural conflict was revealed in the importance of those ethnic and familial divisions and loyalties which manifested themselves through regional, caste and sect identities. It probably also found expression in the kingdom's system of tribute and patronage, by which the great lords were given personal grants or rents in exchange for military service, rather than a permanent jurisdiction. This was a system that Vijayanagara kings probably modelled on Islamic precedents introduced by Turkish conquerors to the sultanates of Delhi and the Deccan. ʿAbd al-Razzaq was, in this and in other things, not struggling to describe an unfamiliar system, but rather choosing to invest in the rhetoric of idealized royalism in an urban setting. He therefore neglects the political history of everyday financial and social problems, limiting his focus to palace intrigues, foreign wars, and an abstract model of an idealized administration.[126]

The existence of Muslim elites of Turkish and Iranian origin in both India and Persia meant that in his journey to idolatrous Vijayanagara ʿAbd al-Razzaq was not really confronting a cultural other in a vacuum of references. An international Islamicate culture which was as important in the Deccan as it was in the Persian lands conquered by Chaghatay Turks and other nomadic tribes provided the conventions by which some key elements of civilization could be identified as universally relevant. Hence the display of artistic skill, a monarchical political order inspired by the idea of justice, and commercial prosperity in an urban setting, all seemed equally uncontroversial. It is of course crucial that ʿAbd al-Razzaq's personal concern was not to talk about religious difference as much as to transmit a political message to the court of his Timurid Turkish overlords, a message that above all reflected his own position as an educated Persian under alien domination. The need to negotiate a cultural dialog in India was therefore no more important than the need to negotiate one at home. Obviously

[126] The historiography of Vijayanagara has been marked traditionally by the difficulty of writing such history. The evidence from temple inscriptions and literary sources unearthed by Robert Sewell and others enabled historians of the first decades of the twentieth-century—writers like N. Venkataramanayya and B.A. Saletore—to propose elaborate models for administrative organization, but there was little study of areas of conflict and processes of change. A number of works written in the last fifteen years have contributed to transform this picture, including Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara*; Noboru Karashima *Towards a New Formation. South Indian Society under Vijayanagar Rule* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992); John M. Fritz and George Michell, eds., *New Light on Hampi* (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2001); and Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan*.

a firm believer in a hierarchical social order, ʿAbd al-Razzaq could see no better answer to the problems of his native Khorasan than to emphasize in India what was already a theme in the ideological traditions of Persia. To insist on the abstract values of an idealized royal justice across cultures was a way of insisting on the more cosmopolitan aspects of the Timurid synthesis under Shahrukh, against the two possible dangers of factional disorder and religious bigotry. This explains ʿAbd al-Razzaq's limited analysis of actual South Indian politics. Later travelers to Vijayanagara, especially the Portuguese horse-traders, were more prepared to widen the analysis to include economic production, technology, and trade as keys to the understanding of social success. But they were, of course, agents of a different world.

Embassies as Cross-Cultural Rituals

The pragmatic relativism practiced by ʿAbd al-Razzaq and his host Devaraya in Vijayanagara, by which the cultural codes were applied flexibly and, if necessary, negotiated on the basis of a calculation of power and interests, was not peculiar to this embassy. Audiences, feasts, or exchanges of letters and presents, were universally recognized as symbolically charged rituals. However, the importance and the risks associated with any mission were extremely variable, as was also the degree of personal sympathy achieved. As we have seen, the Castilians Clavijo and Páez, subjected to conspicuous feasting at Timur's tents, palaces, and gardens outside Samarqand, needed to tread carefully when refusing wine or food. They had to learn *not* to kiss the royal hand, as that was not custom at Timur's camp.[127] They also discovered that the protocol of their presence at the court was mainly determined by Timur's desire to insult the "Cathayan" (Ming) ambassador, after the latter boldly requested tribute from him. And

[127] Clavijo, *Embajada*, 259–60. The expectation of the Spanish ambassadors was not entirely Eurocentric, as kisses also functioned as ritual acts of submission for Turkish rulers like the Ottomans, as documented by Palmira Brummett, "A Kiss is Just a Kiss: Rituals of Submission along the East-West Divide," in Matthew Birchwood and Matthew Dimmock, eds., *Cultural Encounters Between East and West 1543–1699* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005): 107–31. Timur seems to have followed the Mongol custom, as the envoys were made to kneel three times (this genuflection was known as '*chuk*' in Turkish). In the thirteenth century, Rubruck had also been asked to kneel in front of Batu and Möngke, especially when the political nature of his mission became clear (men of religion on purely religious business were exempt).

indeed the elderly Timur was already, in revenge, preparing a military expedition against China. Despite the circumspection of the Castilian narrator, it is obvious that he did not sympathize with Timur's idea of justice when the latter invited the artisans and merchants of Samarqand to display their goods outside the city, only to summarily hang a number of them for charging prices that he deemed too high, and also executing the city governor (*dinā*) for alleged corruption. Noting how the ruler greedily appropriated the victims' goods (the citizens "feared that they had been ordered out of the city with their shops only to be robbed") the journal writer displays no effort to idealize the oriental other as a model for the Spanish self.[128]

Here as in other examples, the issue which needs elucidation is not only the relative weight of circumstance and cultural prejudice in the success and failure of any given embassy, but also the possibility of cross-cultural convergence and its limitations. One might consider European examples like the thirteenth-century missions by friars John of Carpini and William of Rubruck to the Mongol court, which produced very detailed reports of Tartar customs but little practical success or, in the opposite direction, the narrative by the Nestorian monk Rabban Sauma, a Christian Turk from Khanbalik (the "city of the Khan," near modern Beijing) who in 1287–8 acted as envoy of the Ilkhanid ruler of Persia, Arghun, to the West, only to find himself cross-examined by the Roman cardinals for his "heretical" beliefs.

Let us first consider the case of the Franciscan missionaries John of Carpini and William of Rubruck, who in the mid-thirteenth century were sent (in two separate embassies) by Pope Innocent IV (1243–54) and by Louis IX of France (r. 1226–70) to negotiate a peace with the Mongols, and if possible a coalition against their common 'Saracen' (Muslim) enemies. This task was actually very difficult, because the friars could offer very little—paltry presents, to begin with—but demanded no less than that the Mongol khan should become Christian. Prompted by the presence of Nestorian Christians (and of defeated Eastern Christian princes) at the Mongol court, they had been misled into initial expectations of an easy conversion, an expectation which however they had to make compatible with the horrific image with which the 'Tartars' had been described in Europe

[128] Ibid., 283.

at the time of their appearance. This negative image was not in itself an insuperable problem, because the idea of future conversion provided an ideological mechanism by which diplomatic ties could be justified. The mythical ten lost tribes of Israel from the medieval Bible, who had escaped from behind the walls of Gog and Magog—so the cruel 'Tartars' were first classified in Europe—were rapidly replaced with a historical identification based on the personal experience of the mendicant friars, even though it was a qualified experience of otherness best described by Rubruck as if "entering some other world."[129] In fact, he immediately explained, they were neither civilized nor Christian: "nowhere have they any lasting city, and of the one to come they have no knowledge."[130]

The decisive aspect was, however, that the friars could not offer any guarantee of a unified Christian commitment to military assistance, and the fact that they were missionaries rather than true ambassadors reflected this weakness. Their status was actually ambiguous, since both Carpini and Rubruck claimed (sometimes very emphatically) to be missionaries rather than diplomatic envoys, but such was the role of the papacy in the international politics of the period that it would be misleading totally to separate the political and religious aspects of these high-level dealings with 'infidel' powers. The European assumption was that the conversion of the Mongols to Roman Christianity would either follow or (even better) precede any successful agreement, and that a strictly secular embassy was not appropriate or in fact convenient, since, given Mongol claims to world-domination, it could be misread as a show of fear and subjection. There is no doubt that William of Rubruck, shrewd as well as arrogant, was in his own mind primarily a missionary, and (perhaps more surprisingly) that he expected immediate results. He was in fact the victim of over-optimistic reports about the influence of Christianity

[129] William Rubruck, *The Mission of William of Rubruck. His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Mongke 1253–1255*, trans. and ed., Peter Jackson, with David Morgan (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1990), 70–1. The Latin expression is "quod ingrededer quoddam aliud seculum," and one could be tempted to translate "as if entering some other time," except that no sense of regular historical progression from barbarism to civilization is otherwise apparent in the thought of the period. See Anastasius van den Wyngaert, O.F.M., ed., *Sinica Franciscana*, v. *1, Itinera et Relationes Fratrum Minorum Saeculi XIII et XIV* (Karachi and Florence: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1929), 171.

[130] Rubruck, *The Mission*, 72. The friar was paraphrasing *Hebrews* XIII, 14, but cleverly altering the spiritual meaning of the expression "for we have here no lasting city, but we seek one that is to come."

amongst the Mongols. On the other hand, and while it could make sense to suggest a tactical alliance, the envoys did not find any Mongol enthusiasm for a Christian crusade against Islam (until the 1260s the Mongols did not want allies, only subjects).[131] After many humiliations, the friars had the opportunity to engage in direct dialog, but they had little to build upon. Thus they were caught in the misery of second-rate court factions, and were lucky to come out alive, disgusted with what they portrayed (in the end without much to restrain them) as a barbarian society. It was not a lack of accurate observations or mental categories that led them to this conclusion, since they elaborated detailed descriptions of Tartar "life and customs," but rather their inability to play a more satisfactory language-game, that is, to engage in a more successful practice.[132]

What has struck readers of the accounts produced by these Franciscan travelers is their unprecedented value as empirical ethnographies, something due no doubt to the university training of the observers. These were in fact the first important ethnographies of the East written in medieval Europe, preceding Marco Polo by decades. They represent a newly-confident Latin Christian culture dominated by the Church, and within the history of the ethnographic genre, provide a solid basis for comparison with the later accounts written by lay observers. The shift to secular diplomacy exemplified by the narratives of Clavijo's expedition, or by Iosafa Barbaro, is significant as a reflection of changes within European culture after the fourteenth century. By contrast, the geopolitical context remained remarkably faithful to the idea of seeking an alliance with the Khans of Persia against more immediate Muslim enemies of the Middle East, whether they be the Mamluks in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, or the Ottoman Turks after the fourteenth.

The tone of the narrative by the Nestorian monk Rabban Sauma, who travelled to Europe representing Arghun Khan (r. 1284–91), stands in stark contrast with the arrogance and disappointment of those Latins who had dealt with the Mongols less than forty years earlier. Sauma's narrative has arrived to us in the form of a Syriac summary

[131] David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 179–87.

[132] On the friars as ethnographers see Peter Jackson, "William of Rubruck in the Mongol Empire: Perception and Prejudices," in *Travel Fact and Travel Fiction: Studies on Fiction, Literary Tradition, Scholarly Discovery and Observation in Travel Writing*, ed., Zweder von Martels (Leiden: Brill, 1994): 54–71; Also J.R.S. Phillips, *The Medieval Expansion of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 59-82.

by a contemporary of his, who was keen to present his fellow-Christian as a saintly man; but it seems likely that Sauma's original had been written in Persian (the common language of many Nestorian communities), and a version may have been composed for the use of the Mongol Ilkhan.[133] It described the journey from Tabriz through the Black Sea to Constantinople, Italy and France, and then back to the East, in the years 1287–8. Although the embassy was above all directed to the papacy in Rome, Rabban Sauma did not neglect to visit the Christian princes of France and England, especially because in the meanwhile he had to wait for a new pope to be elected. In his letters Arghun Khan proposed a combined attack on the Mamluks in Syria and Palestine; and one would expect that this proposal fitted with the crusading needs of the Franks, with a renewed urgency if anything, given the then dreary prospects in the Holy Land. While Philip of France (r. 1285–1314) and Edward of England (r. 1272–1307) were both enthusiastic about the rhetoric of a new crusade the new pope, Nicholas IV (1288–92), seems to have been more interested in cross-examining the envoy for his Nestorian heresies. His reply to Arghun was also uncompromisingly religious: he first should be baptized, and then he would receive God's help.[134] Remarkably, Rabban Sauma was not excessively put off by this response, and presented a positive, albeit not entirely naive, account of his experience in Europe. The reason was that his personal motivations were religious as much as political. While

[133] Syriac was the ritual language of the Nestorian and other oriental churches, but no longer the common spoken language of the community. For the narrative of Sauma's embassy I have used the French edition, see J.B. Chabot, *Histoire de Mar Jabalaha III, Patriarque des Nestoriens (1281–1317), et du Moine Rabban Çauma, Ambassadeur du roi Argoun en Occident (1287)* (Paris: Ernest Leoux, 1895). There is an English version by E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Monks of Kūblai Khān, Emperor of China* (London: Religious Tracts Society, 1928), and a recent and valuable Italian version, *Storia di Mar Yahballaha e di Rabban Sauma*, ed., Pier Giorgio Borbone (Turin: Silvio Zamorani, 2000). On Sauma in general, see also Morris Rossabi, *Voyager from Xanadu. Rabban Sauma and the First Journey from China to the West* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1992).

[134] Chabot, *Histoire*, 63–8, translates into French Sauma's dialogue-interrogation with the Roman Cardinals (led by the future Nicholas IV), since the pope had died. In Appendix I, Chabot also gives an analysis and edition of Nicholas IV's correspondence with Arghun, ibid. 187–248. It is not as if Nicholas IV, indeed the first Franciscan to become pope, did not care about the crusade. He was also a promoter of missions to the East, sending, among others, friar John of Montecorvino to India. There is no doubt that Nicholas IV was extremely interested in what he had to learn from Rabban Sauma concerning Arghun. On the other hand, the fight against heresy in the end took precedence over the apostolic mission, for reasons of cultural survival, one might say.

he served Arghun faithfully, with the hope that the khan would protect the Christians in his lands and maybe even convert to their religion, his deeper agenda involved visiting the relics and churches of Constantinople, Rome, Paris, and elsewhere. Before reaching the Nestorian churches of Iraq and meeting their Mongol lord (Abakha) in Tabriz, Sauma had left China in order to accompany another Christian monk on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and he was in effect still a kind of pilgrim when later he was ordered to travel to the land of the Franks.[135] When interrogated by the Roman cardinals he answered for his Nestorian beliefs without much anguish, and he enjoyed nevertheless the opportunity to participate in a common religious experience with the Western Christians. He appears to have been genuinely impressed by many aspects of European civilization, and the satisfaction with which he seems to have participated in a common ground of religious ritual and contact with the sacred made up for the vagueness of his hosts' promises, and provided a kind of reply to his suspicion that, in the eyes of many Latins, he was essentially seen as a heretic. He certainly was told that he and all other oriental Christians should accept the exclusive authority of the Roman pope.

For Sauma no less than for Rubruck, the boundaries between religious and political aims were ambiguous, and often the religious idealism of Christian Europe only made political agreement with oriental rulers more difficult. Indeed, later examples reveal instead how the possibility of cross-cultural understanding could best prosper (almost by default) with more secular aims and language. Late medieval secularism did not imply an open challenge to religious culture, but consisted in the establishment of an autonomous, albeit hierarchically inferior, source of authority based on reason and experience. This is a possible way of reading the Castilian embassy led by Ruy González de Clavijo to Timur's court in 1403, or later Venetian contacts with Turco-Persian lords. Crucially, it is within this secular diplomatic sphere that the level of intelligibility of cross-cultural encounters involving oriental travelers also becomes most obvious. Notably, the Timurids themselves exchanged a number of embassies with the Ming court of China in the early fifteenth century, Shahrukh being (unlike his father) more inclined to trade and diplomacy than to brutal conquest. The

[135] The various vicissitudes experienced by the two monks from China in Iraq and Persia, before Markos was elected Patriarch (Catholicus) of the Nestorian Church (as Mar Yaballaha), and the polyglot Sauma was employed by Arghun to act as diplomat, are discussed by Rossabi, *Voyager*, 58–82.

most substantial of these was a return embassy of Turco-Persian lords sent to Ming China in 1419 by Shahrukh and his quasi-independent allies, an account of which, by the artist Ghiyathuddin Naqqash (sent by Shahrukh's son Baysunghur), was also incorporated by ʿAbd al-Razzaq in his historical narrative.[136]

The report was conceived as a systematic journal where (in ʿAbd al-Razzaq's words) the artist would record for his prince "all they witnessed, without addition or deletion: events, conditions of roads, construction of towns, situations of buildings, conditions of kings, etc."[137] In the course of the embassy rich presents were exchanged, and important trade links promised. In the narrative, China was still referred to as 'Cathay' and linked to a historical memory of Mongol domination, but the Persian emissaries were fully aware that they were negotiating with the Chinese and that they had to agree to their terms. Thus the narrative describes the creation of a common ground of understanding and exchange, limited to certain specific areas of mutual interest, and without disrupting each other's identities. This limited exchange is expressed by ritual conventions. As with the later embassy to Vijayanagara, it was the theatre of ritual display and ceremony that made possible the creation of a common 'language' of symbols when verbal communication was mediated by interpreters and so much was vulnerable to potential misunderstandings. In Naqqash's narrative, when tensions arise (and they occasionally do) it is possible to witness a negotiation by which the boundaries of the political and commercial exchange, and its implications for each other's identities, are freshly defined. Crucially, the agents display some flexibility in the use of conventions in order to separate 'superficial' from 'essential' meanings. For example, when the Chinese emperor, angry with the emissaries (because he fell from a horse brought by them) is considering their punishment, the Turco-Persian representatives appeal to contrasting images of magnanimity and

[136] The expedition, the third from Khorasan, lasted from the end on 1419 until 1422. It had been preceded by three Chinese embassies that reached Herat in 1412, 1417, and 1419 respectively. I have consulted the version given by ʿAbd al-Razzaq in Quatremère, *Notices*, 387-426, but for references I rely on the English translation by Thackston, more complete because it conflates this and another manuscript. See Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes*, 279–97.

[137] Thackston, ed., *Century of Princes,* 229.

tyranny in order to establish political values that may be valid for men of different religions.[138]

This process did not merely allow for a minimum of practical understanding. Ghiyathuddin Naqqash also decoded a system of power and justice expressed not only in ritual but also in the organization of the kingdom. He found reason to admire the 'superior' technical and artistic skills of men who were otherwise idolaters, and who ruled over Chinese Muslims (these acted as interpreters) in an enormous and populous empire. As is often the case in Muslim accounts of this period, we find exoteric descriptions of religious practices that are considered idolatry, and even detailed descriptions of idols, without references to doctrine or to any 'inner' religious experience. On the other hand, it is also according to traditional patterns that both artistic skills and political order (including methodical criminal laws) are praised, and we can even catch a glimpse of neo-Confucian religiosity in the behaviour of the emperor. As we have seen, China appeared in Muslim sources, no less than in Western Christian ones, as a model of civilization, an image which, however idealized, could be empirically and extensively substantiated. For Shahrukh and his agents this was not just a traditional myth, but in their own search for civility and trade, a myth that came alive because it was contextually meaningful.

Shahrukh and his Persian servants had a pragmatic motivation to appreciate gentile civilizations, but how unilateral was their approach to China? Indeed, how did the Chinese ambassadors rate the 'civil' life of Samarqand or Herat? Remarkably, there also exist accounts of the Ming embassies to Persia from this period which allow us to consider the Chinese perspective. The Ming represented a nationalist (xenophobic) reaction to the Mongol rule of Kubilai Khan and his successors, and to that extent they were biased against Central Asian nomads; however, after the consolidation of the dynasty, and under the Yung-lo emperor (1404–24) they were momentarily keen on trade and diplomacy with the semi-urbanized Timurid courts. The extension of the 'tributary' system of trade, by which the Ming assumed a ritual superiority while offering goods, was part of an effort to stabilize China's Inner Asian frontiers and isolate the wilder Mongol tribes. Despite the potential for fatal misunderstandings—an

[138] Ibid., 294.

offended Timur who did not wish to be treated like a vassal had died on route to an invasion of China in the winter of 1405—Shahrukh was more accommodating. In fact it was the unique combination of his relatively cosmopolitan attitudes with those of the Yung-lo regime which made possible the brief flowering of trade missions between 1407 and 1424. The Chinese view of themselves as superior to all other peoples was of course incompatible with the Mongol tradition of world rule, and any serious diplomatic exchange was a matter of delicate pragmatic arrangements fuelled by trade interests.[139]

The most interesting Chinese narrative produced by these exchanges is the account written by Ch'en Ch'eng, *Hsi-yü fan-kuo chih* (Monograph of the countries of the western regions), made up of a number of essays subsequently copied into the *Ming Shih-Lu* (The veritable records of the Ming dynasty) and various imperial geographies. Ch'en travelled to 'the far West' in 1414–15 representing the Yung-lo Emperor, and although he visited many towns (including Samarqand) he spent the most time in Herat, with direct access to the court of Shahrukh Bahadur. Indeed, the description of Herat was at the heart of his monograph. (Ch'en also produced a diary of his journey for the emperor, but its ethnographic value is very limited). Ch'en was an experienced civil servant who had worked for the ministry of rites (which was also concerned with foreign relations), and had been selected for his knowledge of various frontier peoples. Although officially he bore gifts in exchange for what was, from the Yung-lo Emperor's perspective, 'tribute,' it was quite crucial to avoid any further misunderstandings, since in 1410 an overly condescending letter to Shahrukh had caused offence, and of course the memory of Timur's insulting and threatening behaviour was relatively recent. Interestingly, the 1410 momentary crisis also reveals that the Turco-Persian reaction to any suggestion that the Chinese emperor was world ruler was a fresh request that he convert to Islam, rhetorically opposing one ideological universalism to the other. By

[139] Ming foreign policy towards the Timurids is discussed by Morris Rossabi, "The Ming and Inner Asia," in *The Cambridge History of China*, v. 8., part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 221–71, see especially 246–50. See also Shih-Shan Henry Tsai, *Perpetual Happiness. The Ming Emperor Yongle* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001), 188–90, which is better on the Chinese than the Persian perspective.

contrast, relations were patched up on the basis of trade caravans and gift exchange (often exotic animals).[140]

Ch'en's mission was successful, and he was promoted and continued to be employed as ambassador to the western regions until the death of the Yung-lo Emperor in 1424, which led to a decline of the foreign missions. It was his report however which left a lasting legacy, becoming the standard work for Ming bureaucrats interested in the western regions. It offered above all a non-fabulous image of Islamic urban civilization, one with recognizable institutions though clearly lacking in justice and decorum.

Ch'en's description is in fact meticulous and very graphic. It first deals with the location of the city, describing buildings and furnishings, often being very precise about the physical appearances of objects, and peoples' dress.[141] Climate and the products of the land (natural and artificial) are also considered, with some exquisite descriptions of unfamiliar vegetables (such as red cabbages), exotic fruits (for example shiny seedless grapes, yellow and purple plums, almonds) or animals (including fine horses, tamed lions, and zebras, which elicit great curiosity). The description is meant to be empirical, but not ideologically neutral. When describing the king and the people, cultural markers such as dress, eating habits, salutations and other behaviour are all understood as a function of social status, and ritual significance is often emphasized. Never too far away (following a consistent pattern within Chinese ethnographies) is a moral judgement based on assuming that Chinese customs, in particular Confucian etiquette, provide the yardstick of true civility. Hence Ch'en notes the "extravagance" (or lack of austerity) in dress, especially amongst young males, the loose social conversation, which

[140] Ch'en's embassy is discussed by Felicia J. Hecker, "A Fifteenth-Century Chinese Diplomat in Herat," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd series, 3 (1993): 85–98. She also analyzes the description of Herat in great detail, emphasizing Ch'en's willingness to provide Chinese equivalents for Persian words. I have relied on the translation by Morris Rossabi, "A Translation of Ch'en Ch'eng's *Hsi-Yü Fan-Kuo Chih*," *Ming Studies* 17 (1983): 49–59. For a broader discussion of the Chinese genres of travel writing see Richard E. Strassberg, *Inscribed Landscapes: Travel Writing from Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[141] Ch'en was observing Herat at a time when Shahrukh had scarcely begun a programme of construction that would generate some very beautiful tiled buildings. Hence Ch'en only saw brick buildings with rather basic glass decorations, and occasionally a beautiful carved and inlaid wooden door. It was a transformed city that ʿAbd al-Razzaq had in mind when comparing it to Vijayanagara a few decades later. See Terry Allen, *Timurid Herat* (Wiesbaden: L. Reichart Verlag, 1983).

lacks ceremony, and the custom of marrying a brother's wife.[142] All of these elicit more criticism than religious beliefs per se (although the lack of ancestor worship is commented upon as a kind of deficiency).[143] In fact Ch'en has respect for Muslim learning (Herat's madrasa has people "who truly understand the classics" and it is similar to "China's great schools"), and writes positively about prayer and fasting, as well as the strict prohibition against wine. By contrast, the barefooted, mumbling, wandering dervishes who dwell in caves and cemeteries are entirely pitiful (yet "they call this cultivating morality"), while bazaar doctors only merit scepticism. It becomes quite clear that while the implicit concept of superior civilization takes China as the model, specific customs are assessed in their own terms. Hence the baths (followed by a pleasant massage) are a clear mark of civilization, and irrigation, watermills and windmills are all commendable. By contrast, the political order is perceived to be somewhat primitive, especially the government ministries, which lack specialization; and Ch'en is emphatic about the lack of criminal justice. (He possibly exaggerates, but his observation nicely dovetails with 'Abd al-Razzaq's own 'native Persian' desire for strong royal justice).[144] In a similar vein, although there is a market with specialized shops and a system of silver coinage based on three weights, there is a lack of standard measures, and the tax system is very basic (all government expenses are covered by a 20% sales tax). In some

[142] Ch'en also believed that "many take their elder or younger sisters as wife or concubines," Rossabi, "A translation," 51, but this seems an error.

[143] Ibid., 51: "The people do not sacrifice to ghosts and gods nor do they build temples to make offerings to the ancestors or erect ancestral shrines. They only sacrifice and make offerings near the tombs of their ancestors." Interestingly, it is not clear that Ch'en fully understood the Muslim concept of God. There is a reference to the Muslim fear of blaspheming "Heaven," but daily Muslim prayers at the mosque (or when traveling) are described without reference to God, and "monotheism" is not offered as an explanation for the lack of ancestor worship. There is obviously no engagement with the Muslim concept of idolatry.

[144] Ibid.: "The state does not use criminal law, and the military and civilian populations seldom engage in litigations. If a person is killed, the punishment does not go beyond a fine of a certain amount. There is no capital punishment. For lesser crimes the culprit does not receive more than a slight punishment." Obviously Ch'en is not giving sufficient credit for the sharia administered by the qadis, and is wrong about the lack of capital punishment. However, with reference to China, he is quite correct when noting the limited bureaucracy: "They do not establish big or small offices. They also do not have a civil service system. The men who care for affairs are called *tiao-wan* [*dīwān*] officials (ibid., 50)." 'Abd al-Razzaq was by contrast ready to describe the rather simple administrative structure of Vijayanagara as perfectly adequate.

respects the Khorasanis are very good but they fall short of the Chinese, for example in their painted ceramics, which are extremely beautiful but inferior to porcelain. Their silk production is also deficient in some ways. Their metalwork for weapons is on the other hand excellent.

Thus Ch'en transmits a very clear sense of Chinese superiority on almost all fronts, but with the implication that Islamic cities, arts, and customs are not too far below the scale. Indeed, the text illustrates a Confucian sense of Chinese centrality which is far more extreme than anything encountered either in contemporary European accounts of Persia or China, or in Persian accounts of China, India, or the Franks. Crucially, this Chinese sense of moral superiority is, by contrast with most contemporary Christian and Muslim ethnographies, not very concerned with religion as an independent and hierarchically superior category of analysis.[145]

If Ch'en's account of Herat offers a wonderful glimpse of the assumptions about civility underlying Ming culture, its rapid transformation into a timeless 'classic' also illustrates perfectly the limited role of exotic ethnography in Chinese culture. As Felicia Hecker has noted, "over the course of three-hundred years from 1415 to 1736, no new material was added to Ch'en's observations. And thus they formed, in recensions of ever-decreasing size, the sum total of Chinese knowledge, at least in written form, of the city of Herat."[146] In effect, following the relatively short 'creative phase' of the late Yuan-early Ming period (1250–1450), when the struggle against Mongol con-

[145] The attitude of Chinese Muslims like the eunuch Ma Huan in his famous *Ying-yai Sheng-lan* (The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores) of 1433 is more complex and would require a separate discussion. The Chinese assumptions of their civilization as superior were not, however, controversial, and can also be illustrated by several Yuan and early Ming works (not only Ma Huan's) with ethnographic data on the maritime world of Southeast Asia. Consider for example the compilations analyzed by Roderich Ptak in his "Images of Maritime Asia in Two Yuan Texts: *Daoyi zhilue* and *Yiyu zhi*," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*, 25 (1995): 47–75. (In my quotations below I follow Ptak's usage of the Pinyin transliteration system). Ptak's analysis makes it clear that in these writings, especially in Wang Dayuan's highly influential *Daoyi Zhilue* [*Tao-i Chih-lueh*] of c. 1349, only China was fully civilized and imbued with the "correct breath" (*zheng qi*) of nature, and foreign customs (*fengsu*) were almost invariably to be judged through the lens of Confucian moral codes. It is nevertheless important to note that there also was in China a sub-current of primitivism and relativism which was Taoist in inspiration, and polemically anti-Confucian (it is already attested in the "Questions of T'ang," from the Taoist classic *Lieh-tzu* of c. 300 AD).

[146] Hecker, "A Fifteenth-Century Diplomat," 96.

querors created the conditions for a more cosmopolitan perspective, the Chinese ethnographic tradition became characterized by extreme textual conservatism, with very limited renewal of the ethnographic sources (generally circumscribed to those internal and external frontiers that remained active as sites of state-led sinicization). This conservatism is illustrated not only by the fate of descriptions of Persian cities such as Ch'en's, but also by those accounts of South-East Asia and the Indian Ocean generated by writers such as Fei Hsin and Ma Huan during the great maritime expeditions of Cheng Ho, accounts in which the island of Timor, or the city Calicut in the Malabar coast, became as well-known as Herat.[147] As is well known, these remarkable expeditions suffered a fate similar to the Central Asian embassies; they were denounced as wasteful and unnecessary by the Confucian mandarin elite only a few years after the demise of the Yung-lo Emperor, and finally stopped. As China was understood to be self-sufficient and its culture superior to all others, it need not travel to meet the barbarians; rather, it should simply control its frontiers, limiting trade through a formal tribute system that emphasized the ritual superiority of the Chinese emperor. If anything, it was the barbarians who should aspire to learn Chinese customs.[148]

[147] Ma Huan, *Ying-yai Sheng-lan (The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores) [1433]*, trans. and ed., J.G.V. Mills (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1970); Fei Hsin, *Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan (The Overall Survey of the Star Raft)*, trans. J.V.G. Mills, ed. Roderich Ptak (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996).

[148] The Chinese emphasis on the superiority of their civilization was maintained in the Ming period through the continuous re-cycling of the earlier ethnographic materials. Thus, the idea that Chinese moral behaviour and ritual provided a universal standard from which to judge other cultures as inferior, and which other cultures should seek to imitate, came to pervade the world of popular fiction. One example of this thematic continuity is the way Lo Mou-teng's 1597 novel on early Ming voyages to the Indian Ocean used information about Timor first recorded in Wang Dayuan's eyewitness account of 1349, and later summarized by Fei Hsin in order to complete his 1436 account of the third maritime expedition led by Cheng Ho, *Hsing-ch'a Sheng-lan*, "The overall survey of the star raft" (Ibid.). The descriptions of Timor by Wang Dayuan and Fei Hsin emphasized the Chinese distaste for native moral values, which were seen as centered on immoderate consumption of food, wine and sex. Chinese men tended to see women in Southeast Asian cultures as shameless (and Jesuit missionaries did admit that they had little to teach the Chinese about female modesty). See Roderich Ptak, "Some References to Timor in Old Chinese Record," *Ming Studies* 17 (1983): 37–48. Interestingly, this emphasis on chastity also explains why the ideal of moral self-restraint could serve to connect the Chinese and Latin Christian traditions. For example, it is not coincidental that Matteo Ricci chose 'natural' ethics as a trans-cultural ground on which to cultivate Christianity, using Epictetus and Confucius to define values that Europeans and Chinese could share.

Hence when late in the seventeenth century, under the impact of Qing imperialism, the empirical ethnographic genre was revived in the form of local gazetteers and illustrated albums in a variety of frontier settings, often feeding into the more general and encyclopaedic *Imperial Illustrations of Tributaries*, its administrative origins, colonizing function, and Confucian assumptions towards cultural assimilation remained rigid and culturally monocentric.[149]

Conclusions

What these various examples reveal, taken as a group, is the existence of general mechanisms of cross-cultural political exchange which operated in a variety of contexts, and within diverse ideological traditions. The conventions of each genre changed through practice itself, so that the development of a sustained tradition of travel narratives depended not on a pre-existing mentality, but rather on the continuity and intensity of support that these genres received in each civilization.

The first and more obvious conclusion that we can reach is that cultural traditions are flexible. Rather than just a common attitude for each 'civilization' in all sources, to a very large extent political and personal circumstances determined positive or negative views of 'the other.' Thus, we need contextual readings of each narrative, rather than generalizations concerning European, Chinese, or Muslim attitudes. When considering ambassadorial narratives from a comparative perspective, two fundamental processes can be discerned: disappointment and idealization (sometimes both are present in the same narrative).

It is also possible to assert that the idea of civilization ('civility' or 'political' order, in European idiom) was in part trans-cultural, but not entirely. It was also a concept that was being defined with more

[149] For a discussion of this ethnographic sources as examples of colonialism with special reference to the Miao and other non-Han peoples of the South-western province of Guizhou, see Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise. Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001). Some examples relating to the Mongols and the western frontier, emphasizing the way the imperial discourse was subtly modulated to appeal to Manchu, Han Chinese and Mongol audiences, are discussed in Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West. The Qing Conquests of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2005), 214–20, 409–86.

precision (and with some controversial elements) through a number of interactions. The actual expressions used by travel writers and historians relate to distinct and to a large extent markedly different traditions of geographical and ethnological thought, Latin-Christian, Arab-Persian, and Chinese (even if we make allowances for the existence of a common Judeo-Hellenistic background to the Christian and Islamic traditions). There is however also a wide area of consensus in the general use of the often implicit idea of civilization which can be explored further. Rather than merely seeking to define what is peculiar and culture-specific about abstract concepts like the Latin '*civilitas*' or the Arabic *'adab'* which in fact can vary from author to author, what seems most fruitful is understanding the development and use of a complex semantic field within a dynamic set of genres.

Although the classical opposition between barbarism and civilization was already deployed ethnographically in Europe from the twelfth century (for example, by Anglo-Norman writers against the Celtic fringe), and was revived by thirteenth-century ambassadors to the Mongols like friar William of Rubruck on the basis of urbanism and letters, in late medieval ambassadorial reports there predominated a concept of civilization which was more implicit, and largely independent from classical references. It was, in fact, a concept that could be shared trans-culturally with Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and Indian cultures. There were three key elements of consensus within that implicit concept: the extent of urban prosperity and commerce, the refinement of artistic skills, and the strength and stability of a political authority responsible for security and the administration of justice. A fourth obviously important element, the pursuit of learning, could be more controversial due to religious disputes. 'Science' was not always seen as theologically neutral, especially by missionaries (as we have seen, Chinese observers, uncontaminated by the concept of idolatry tied to the Biblical image of a creator God, were less bothered with exclusive religious worship). The emergence of a distinctly secular (that is, non-religious) concept of civilization encompassing a wide range of analytical categories would become one of the distinctive elements of European culture *after* the Renaissance, largely under the influence of humanism. As the parable of the 'three eyes of the world' exemplifies, from the fourteenth century Europe and China—the 'Franks' and the 'Cathayans'—at the two extremes

of an Eurasian continuum, emerged as the highest points of 'civility,' while a devastated Islamic world, from Persia to North Africa, was increasingly problematized as a center of civilization, even by some Muslim observers. This problematizing had a lot to do with the Mongol and Turkish invasions, which also created the political context for many of the embassies we have considered. The relative positions of Western Europe, China, and the Islamic empires were not of course stable, as developments throughout the early modern centuries would show.

A third possible conclusion is that religious principles conditioned both embassies and ethnography. The principle of religious exclusion seems more rigid in Islam and Latin Christianity than (let us say) in traditional Mongol, Nestorian Christian, or Chinese Ming ideologies. However, that relative flexibility does not imply a lack of ethnocentrism in the more religiously tolerant systems. The Turco-Mongols, like Timur for example, excelled in a brutal and highly destructive imperialism; the Ming, on the other hand, displayed an extreme cultural arrogance which in the long term turned out to be fatal to their own progress. In Christianity and Islam, the barriers created by religious classifications could often be circumvented by what we might call 'secular empiricism' (perhaps the crucial element in the history of the Western genre), or by utopian idealization and analogy. These two approaches were not mutually exclusive; ʿAbd al-Razzaq combined both in his account of Vijayanagara.

My fourth point is that identifying mediations is crucial for understanding narratives. This point appears obvious when considering the transmission of the proverb of the 'three eyes of the world;' often European sources are full of non-European views. As I have argued elsewhere, that is one of the keys to reading the extraordinary book of Marco Polo, whose description of the world has been to some extent Europeanized (with the help of Rustichello of Pisa), but is not at heart European.[150] More generally, interpreters played a crucial (albeit usually invisible) role in the formation of mutual views, and even affected the outcome of embassies. Moreover, precisely because ordinary linguistic capacity was often strained, the 'ritual languages'

[150] Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, 35–84. See also (in a similar vein) John Larner, *Marco Polo and the Discovery of the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 67.

by which power was expressed were crucial to most actual ambassadorial ceremonies. What is important to realize is that these ritual languages were often decoded or even 'taught;' they exemplify the mechanism by which language-games can be learnt despite initial cultural differences. There would have been little point to many of the events that surrounded these embassies if a capacity for cross cultural understanding could not be assumed. This argument does not, however, deny the fact that domestic audiences were also important and that they could be sent, or perceive, different messages from those meant for foreign visitors. 'Abd al-Razzaq probably exaggerated his own standing in Vijayanagara and idealized the Indian kingdom in order to succeed in Herat. Through his personal pilgrimage, as explained to his Nestorian Christian audience, Rabban Sauma triumphed in the West, although he was seen as a 'heretic' by his hosts. Yet from a cross-cultural perspective the success or failure of many embassies was largely determined by learning languages and language-games, and indeed by creating common language-games. Hence Rubruck 'failed:' he and Möngke Khan talked across purposes. His is indeed a narrative of disappointment, due mainly to his inability to overcome wrong expectations.

A final (and perhaps most interesting) conclusion is that when assessing the historical significance of these 'civilized' encounters, cultural spaces can be more important than individual genius. If we consider how the various narratives of embassies functioned in a wider cultural system, we can finally talk about something quite peculiar to Europe dating from this period: not the capacity to be empirical and describe 'others' according to analytical categories—the capacity to create ethnographies—which is of course well attested elsewhere, but rather the growth of these narratives in sheer numbers, and (perhaps more decisive) their increasingly important role in the cultural system as a whole. Their relative rarity is what characterizes many non-European narratives of embassies: some were totally unique (Sauma), others existed in a tradition which was often interrupted (Ming Chinese), or sporadic (Persian). Even though a travel narrative like Marco Polo's is totally exceptional, over the centuries, and especially from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, their number in Europe grew. The remarkable consequence is that after 1500 the European genre of travel writing (in which embassies constituted one important sub-genre) exploded into a solid tradition,

with new rules of authentication and a new authority made possible by this very growth. The extent to which, between 1500 and 1750, ethnographic writings about all parts of the world contributed to a variety of forms of historical and naturalistic learning and its wide-ranging philosophical implications in a transnational republic of letters, goes well beyond the cultural impact of imperial lists of tributaries, local gazetteers and ethnographic albums produced, for example, during the Qing ethnographic and cartographic Renaissance of the first half of the eighteenth century, in which these genres were almost entirely confined to supporting imperial expansion and assimilating minorities—that is to say, to administrative and propaganda purposes. The role of ethnography in questioning traditional views of religion and civilization, not any form of 'empirical' rationality or idea of superior civilization, is what seems unique to Europe.[151] The comparison between narratives in fact suggests that Europeans did not have a monopoly of the idea of civilization (or a monopoly of cultural, political or religious arrogance). Furthermore, they were not always seen as the most civilized, especially when compared to the Chinese. In fact, they did not always consider *themselves* the most civilized (not until well after 1600), even as they regularly assumed that their version of Christianity was the one true religion to the exclusion of all others.

Perhaps the Muslim tradition of the classical age offers the most dramatic counterpoint to this European takeoff. The Arabic tradition of ethnological writing was abundant and highly sophisticated well before the genre grew in Latin Christendom, with both religion and civilization functioning as key concepts in the tenth and eleventh centuries, no less than in Western Europe five hundred years later (although, arguably, there was no real language of mediation between the concepts of civility and religion—potentially a crucial difference).[152]

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[151] I develop this argument systematically in my next book, *Europe's New Worlds. Travel Writing and the Origins of the Enlightenment, 1500–1750*. By contrast, I believe that, perhaps relying excessively on a global notion of early modernity, Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*, 1–32, underestimates the differences between the late Ming / early Qing genres, and their European equivalents.

[152] For an application of the concepts of religion and civilization in Arab ethnology see André Miquel, "L'Inde chez les Géographes Arabes avant l'An Mil," in *L'Inde et l'Imaginaire*, ed., C. Weinberger-Thomas (Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1988): 49–55, in particular 53. The lack of a language of mediation between religion and civilization equivalent to the European concept of natural law meant that even when the social structures of (let us say) China were admirable,

The Arabic idea of civilization, in turn, involved a conventional hierarchy from the admirable Chinese to the barbarism of cannibals. This ethnological discourse was the product of a "cultivated urbanity" associated with court culture, and basically independent from religious concerns.[153] And yet this very dependence on court culture, together with the unassailability of religious themes, made this kind of literature particularly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of a fragile political structure. The "vigour of Arab traders and scholars" noted by Aziz al-Azmeh in his analysis of the genre's original vitality could not guarantee the diversified and dynamic audiences that made the genre explode in Renaissance Europe. This also helps explain that the highly conventional character of Arabic ethnological types, ultimately based, as in the West, on Greek models of climatic-medical determinism, never broke down as it would in Europe after the fifteenth century.

As we have seen, between 1250 and 1500, before Europe created a global maritime system of trade and colonization, there was already a great deal of communication within Eurasia, cultural, ethnic, and political. There was also a fundamental shift in the center of gravity of world civilizations, from the unquestionable superiority of an Islamicate central ecumene (to adopt the idiom proposed by Marshall Hodgson) to the increase in the levels of political strength, economic prosperity, technical expertise and scientific learning in the extremes of China and Western Europe—'Cathay' and 'the Franks,' as Arab-Persian writers would define them. Much before one can meaningfully talk about the power of a European capitalist system, relative levels of political stability were crucial to this shift. We can safely conclude that the notion of 'civilization' already implicit in late medieval accounts of embassies did not function radically differently in the three traditions that we have considered. It is in fact striking the extent to which perceptions of civilization articulated in empirical ethnographies accurately reflected shifting hierarchies within the increasingly connected world of civilized, literate societies. Although the tension between secular and religious discourses, understood as sharply distinct discourses with autonomous legitimacies, was of uni-

this could never be more than accidental, as Miquel notes (55). For a more extended discussion of Arab ethnology, see A. Miquel, *La Géographie Humaine du Monde Musulman*, 4 vols. (Paris: Mouton, 1967–1988).

[153] Aziz Al-Azmeh, "Barbarians in Arab Eyes," *Past & Present*, 134 (1992): 3–18.

que importance to the Latin West, this was not in itself a mark of cultural superiority, nor did it imply any higher level of ethnocentrism. Rather, it potentially stimulated the growth of (without necessarily leading to) a more extensive and philosophical ethnographic genre. The development of ethnography did not of course imply the relative success of a civilization in competition against others, but it is also quite striking that the unique European dynamic after the Renaissance—a subject for a proper discussion elsewhere—would be accompanied by an equally unique investment in the ethnographic genre, and in the concept of civilization that that genre helped articulate.[154]

[154] This article was originally written as part of the research that led to my *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance 1250–1625*, and has benefited from the attention of various scholars. In particular, Sanjay Subrahmanyam read a preliminary version of my analysis of 'Abd al-Razzaq in 1992, and suggested some additional references. John Headley read a more extensive manuscript in 1999, and was kind to incorporate my account of 'the three eyes of the world' in his excellent essay, "The Universalizing Principle and Process: On the West's Intrinsic Commitment to a Global Context," *Journal of World History* 13, 2 (2002): 291–321. A conference, *Between Empires: 'Orientalism' before 1600* (Trinity College, Cambridge, July 2001) gave me the feedback of a sympathetic audience, as of course also the symposium *The 'Book' of Travels* at the University of Tennessee in 2006, which prompted this final version. It also offered the opportunity of some solid editorial advice from Palmira Brummett.

CHAPTER THREE

RUY GONZÁLEZ DE CLAVIJO'S NARRATIVE OF COURTLY LIFE AND CEREMONY IN TIMUR'S SAMARQAND, 1404

David J. Roxburgh

> And she had so much white lead [*albayalde*] and other white stuff on her face, that she seemed no more than a paper mask.
> —Ruy González de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 290.[1]

Although Ruy González de Clavijo probably did not intend it, his description of the appearance of "Cano" (the Great Khanim), Timur's chief wife, as she entered the great pavilion serves as a potent metaphor for much that he witnessed during his sojourn in Samarqand between 8 September and 20 November, 1404.[2] As ambassador of King Henry III of Castile (r. 1390–1406), Ruy González de Clavijo enjoyed generous access to the life and ceremony of the Timurid royal court and left one of the most detailed and lengthy accounts of their settings.

"Cano," identifiable as Saray Mulk Khanim, had come to join her husband Timur (r. 1370–1405) for a great feast, one of several

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[1] Ruy González de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, ed. with introduction and notes by Francisco López Estrada (Madrid: Castalia, 1999), 290. The Spanish reads: *E ella tenía en la cara tanto albayalde e otra cosa blanca, que no parescía, salvo como un paper*. I thank Tom Cummins for his extreme generosity in helping to translate passages from Spanish into English and Hugo Van der Velden for several conversations on the topic of travel literature.

[2] Generally referenced in the Persian sources as *bānū-yi kubrā* or *bānū-yi ʿuzmā*, Timur's first wife "notified Timur on the birth of his children and grandchildren. On important occasions, such as weddings or victory celebrations, she organized ceremonial banquets (*tūy-i sangīn*) for the whole family." See Priscilla P. Soucek, "Timurid Women: A Cultural Perspective," in *Women in the Islamic World: Power, Patronage, and Piety*, ed., Gavin R.G. Hambly (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 199–226, 203. Saray Mulk Khanim additionally brought Timur prestige because of her illustrious descent. Soucek's essay contains many additional details about her, as well as other noble women of the Timurid house.

arranged at the Kan-i Gil (lit. Mine of clay) meadow located outside Samarqand. Clavijo offers an expanded description of her procession into the pavilion and of what she was wearing. Joined by fifteen servants to carry her train, eunuchs, and a male servant carrying a "shade" (*sombra*), Saray Mulk Khanim was dressed in red silk, her face covered by a white veil. She wore a complex headdress, fashioned from red fabric ornamented with pearls, rubies, turquoise, feathers, and held together with gold wire. As she moved forward, the tall headdress swayed with each step. Clavijo estimated some three hundred attendants making up her royal suite. Her shade was assembled from white silk stretched over a wooden arch at the end of a wooden pole resembling a lance—Clavijo observes that the shade was "made like the top of a round tent."[3]

Clavijo's analogizing is to be expected given that by this time his senses had been assaulted by a bewildering array of 'architecture,' much of it 'soft' architecture of various types of tents (some trellis tents, others stayed with guys), awnings, and walls of cloth assembled temporarily for ad hoc purposes. Much of that soft architecture simulated the form and affect of hard, permanent architecture whether through aspects of form or decoration. It is in this respect that his comparison of Saray Mulk Khanim's made-up face to a paper mask might be held to function as a metaphor for his experiences in Samarqand, particularly his experiences of the physical settings of courtly life and ceremony. Her doubly-screened face—one screen a cloth veil, the other a thick layer of applied make-up—concealed her true identity, just as some of the tents Clavijo witnessed could be observed from the outside but not visited inside; though some of these tents were provided with mesh windows, the mesh operated in such a way as to be opaque from the outside and transparent from the inside. Even Saray Mulk Khanim's "shade" resembled a tent albeit in miniature. One might even say that Clavijo witnessed Saray Mulk Khanim transformed into a stately, portable, and kinetic edifice. She was one of many spectacles that Clavijo witnessed while in Samarqand and for which he groped to find an adequate descriptive language and nomenclature.[4]

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[3] *E encima d'ella le traían una sombra que levaba un omne con un asta como de lança; e era de un paño de seda blanco, fecho como copa de tienda redonda, e fazíale venir estendido un arco de madera redondo*, Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 290–1.

[4] I have retained the conventional attribution of the text to Clavijo's authorship despite the fact that there is no definitive evidence to prove it as discussed by López Estrada. See Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 36–8.

Clavijo's narrative is one of the chief primary sources used by historians mentally to reconstruct the architectural edifices sponsored by Timur in his capital city of Samarqand and its environs. Other sources include the accounts of Ibn ʿArabshah and the panegyric history-biography of Timur by Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi.[5] This essay takes a slightly different tack. Rather than favoring the strictly literal dimensions of Clavijo's narrative—what might be gleaned from it qualitatively or as information of various orders—this paper considers how he writes about Timurid architecture and spaces of ceremony, how his writing is as much about experience as it is about description, and how his description attempts to embody experience for a reader *in absentia*. In that sense, the rhetorical fabric of his narrative and his means of telling and structuring the story of the embassy are of equal interest to what he actually writes about.[6] The extent of Clavijo's descriptive detail has been noted by modern readers of the *Embajada a Tamorlán*. This feature of the prose, its 'realism,' is regarded as characteristic of the embassy report genre generally—ambassadors, like spies, were charged with recording what they saw as accurately as possible—and in Clavijo's case this detail has been described as "extreme (if rather pedestrian)."[7]

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[5] The other principal primary sources are in Persian and Arabic by Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi and Ahmad b. Muhammad, known as Ibn ʿArabshah. For editions of their texts, see Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī Yazdī, *Ẓafarnāma: tā'rīkh-i 'umūmī-i mufaṣṣal-i Īrān dar dawra-i Tīmūrīyān*, ed., Muḥammad ʿAbbāsī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Amīr Kabīr, 1336/1957 or 1958); and Ibn ʿArabshāh, *'Ajā'ib al-maqdūr fī nawā'ib Tīmūr*, ed., ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Anjilū al-Miṣrīya, 1399/1979). The last was translated by J.H. Saunders as *Tamerlane or Timur, the Great Amir, from the Arabic Life of Ahmed ibn Arabshah* (London: Luzac, 1936). Ibn ʿArabshah completed his text in 1435 after his return to Mamluk lands (he was a captive of the Timurids between 1401 and 1422).

[6] Few scholars have commented on the rhetorical dimensions of Clavijo's narrative and questioned his 'objectivity' as an eyewitness. Reviewing López Estrada's new edition of the *Embajada a Tamorlán*, Michael Agnew points this out but does not elaborate on his point: Michael Agnew, *Hispanic Review* 70, 4 (2002): 630–1; 630. The ideological factors that might have shaped Clavijo's text, however, are probably beyond the reach of historians today. One of the few studies to take a thematic approach to Clavijo's text—here dealing with issues of foreignness and the embassy's logistical aspects—is by Uta Lindgren, "The Problems of Being a Foreigner: Ruy González de Clavijo's Journey to Samarkand," *Clio Medica* 14, 3/4 (1980): 225–34. The development in travel narratives of "a rhetoric fit to account for displacements of the body and the particular emotions those displacements arouse," and the various *topoi* and literary techniques they generated, were noted by Paul Zumthor, but they have as yet not been addressed for Clavijo's text. See Paul Zumthor, "The Medieval Travel Narrative," *New Literary History* 25, 4 (1994): 809–24; 812.

[7] Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Introduction," in *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel*, eds., Ján Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 1–56, 46.

It is this level of description in Clavijo's narrative and its accumulative realistic effect that brought, quite understandably, so many historians of architecture to the source. And yet, historians may have been too eager to form coherent reconstructions from what Clavijo tells us, taking his narrative as a form of documentary reporting quite distinct from the overtly literary Persian primary sources on Timur's court.[8] Clavijo's text supplied what the Persian sources did not. This was not only a matter of presenting copious detail and evincing an unabashed interest in description—recording the most mundane or culturally accepted (i.e. taken for granted) aspects of life that an insider would not—but he delivered it through a textual matrix that seemed objective and transparent, in a prose style unencumbered by the conventions of literary practice. Though Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi introduces and portrays several of the same settings of Timurid courtly life and ceremony witnessed by Clavijo in his *Ẓafarnāma* (Book of Victory), his Persian text is readily perceived as a rhetorical construct, and a highly complex one at that.[9] The broad contrast created by comparing the European and Persian language sources has had the unfortunate effect of defining the relative balance of literal and

[8] For example, Donald Wilber, "The Timurid Court: Life in Gardens and Tents," *Iran* 17 (1979): 127–33, writes: "Fortunately, the writings of foreign, non-Muslim observers are often more pertinent to certain of our interests, and these individuals of many centuries earlier possessed much the same interest in the details of daily life as journalists and travelers today" (127). One of the more adroit uses of Clavijo's narrative is an essay by Bernard O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 249–68. Though he relies on the problematic translation by Guy Le Strange, O'Kane notes the ambiguities of Clavijo's text, especially when it comes to the description of the Aq Saray in Shahr-i Sabz. The most recent assessment of the sites of Timur's courtly ceremony and other functions was developed by Lisa Golombek, "The Gardens of Timur: New Perspectives," *Muqarnas* 12 (1995): 137–47. In her essay, she revises and corrects some arguments made in earlier studies while also advancing new interpretations. One of the most critical aspects of previous research attempted to locate the gardens named in different written sources and in relationship to suburbs around Samarqand. Golombek's most recent essay, "Gardens of Timur," 138, offers new suggestions to pre-existing maps drawn up by her and Wilber and also by Dietrich Brandenburg. See Dietrich Brandenburg, *Samarkand: Studien zur islamischen Baukunst in Uzbekistan* (Berlin: Hessling, 1972), 205.

[9] An additional difference worth emphasizing is that Yazdi's text was not an eyewitness account. Yazdi was born in the 1390s and entered Timurid service in 1419 under Ibrahim Sultan in Shiraz. He completed the *Ẓafarnāma* in 1424–5, adapting the text of the same name composed by Nizam al-Din Shami at Timur's order in 1404. See John Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46, 2 (1987): 81–108; esp. 99–105.

figurative elements in each literary tradition: this almost always resulted in rendering Persian sources still more conceptually foreign and of dubious use value.[10] Conversely the surface prerogatives of Clavijo's text, where it addresses architecture, were welcomed as close to, and consonant with, the interests of modern readers. But Clavijo's report should not be taken as a substitute for architectural evidence. If the objective of his narrative descriptions was to provide a key that would yield flawless reconstructions of these sites, then he failed.[11] Clavijo's narrative uses certain literary strategies—description chief among them—to authenticate itself as an eye-witness account and then uses that status as a means of enhancing the reader's experience of spectacle. If anything, the abundance of description spectazularizes the spectacle that Clavijo was so keen on relating.

At the kernel of this essay lies our understanding of the physical and aesthetic aspects of Timur's "palaces," the settings of the royal court and how we might understand them through a more critical reading of Clavijo's narrative.[12] Though several "palaces" commissioned by Timur are mentioned in the primary sources, some fifteen palaces in all, only a fragment of one survives, the Aq Saray (White palace) in Timur's second capital Shahr-i Sabz located south of Samarqand.[13] The poor survival rate of secular structures can be

[10] I have written at some length elsewhere about the effects of this implicit comparative approach and its methodological implications. See David J. Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image: The Writing of Art History in Sixteenth-Century Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), esp. 5–15.

[11] Compare Clavijo's narrative passages on architecture, soft or hard, to the albeit prescriptive text outlining the construction of the ark, table, lamp stand, tabernacle, altar of the burnt offering, and its courtyard in Exodus 25–7. The text describes the materials of each, their dimensions relative to each other, and spatial configuration.

[12] For sake of time, and not of interest, I do not here engage the study of the genre of Clavijo's narrative in a long-standing debate explored by structuralists—who might deem his text more discourse and incipient narrative because of certain aspects of grammar, voice, and the lack of overriding plot—and a speech-act theory that tends to collapse distinctions between discourse and narrative favoring instead a contextual approach to the text. The propositions of the two approaches and their differences are nicely conveyed in essays by Hayden White and Marilyn Waldman in W.J.T. Mitchell, ed., *On Narrative* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[13] A list of palaces attested in the sources is made available in Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, *The Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 1: 445–7, "Supplementary Catalogue of Monuments." Golombek and Wilber note that the naming of the palace as "Aq" Saray was more likely intended to convey the notion of the "aristocratic" rather than

explained in part by the rupture in patronage brought about by the original founder's death. Most Islamic palaces did not attract continued patronage and occupation, some notable examples notwithstanding (the Topkapı Saray in Istanbul and the Alhambra in Granada). Another reason offered for the low survival rate of residential structures, Timur's palaces among them, is that they were "built of impermanent materials, such as wood, mud-brick, or mud-plaster..."[14] Several writers, including Clavijo, sketch Timur as an impatient patron, eager to see buildings take shape in short timeframes and easily dissatisfied by buildings that were taking too long or that were insufficiently monumental. Here, the line of thinking would be that Timur's ambition to build and the scope of construction of his projects was so great, that architects and builders abandoned permanence for his "palaces." What becomes evident from the study of Timur's palaces—and several publications have already hinted at this—is that their architecture need not be identified with the physical attributes of longevity or monumentality. Timur's palaces were set in extramural orchards and gardens around Samarqand. In Samarqand only one palace, the Gök Saray (Sky palace) located in the citadel to the west of the city, was intramural.[15] (And hence comparable to the intramural Aq Saray in Shahr-i Sabz).

Also at stake in the nature of Timur's palaces and their settings is the range of impulses that drove them. Most scholars who have studied this material would agree that Timur's palaces brought together features and practices of settled Perso-Islamicate court culture and Turco-Mongol practices of pastoral nomadism.[16] However, the precise balance between the two sets of traditions and the motiva-

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referencing a building that was "white" (ibid., 1: 271). An underutilized source composed by Jean of Sultaniyya actually mentions "eighteen very large palaces full of treasures" belonging to Timur in Samarqand. See Jean of Sultaniyya, "Mémoire sur Tamerlan et sa cour par un Dominicain, en 1403," ed., H. Moranvillé, *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 55 (Paris, 1894), 433–64, 451.

[14] Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, 1: xxiii.

[15] As to its function, Monica Gronke, "The Persian Court Between Palace and Tent: From Timur to 'Abbas I," in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, eds., Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 19–22, notes it was mostly a treasury and prison and not a residence (19).

[16] The closest parallels to the Timurid dynasty's tentage are found in the 1200s and 1330s under the Mongols. For a general introduction to tentage under the Mongols, see Thomas T. Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 13–5

tions that prompted such fusions, or juxtapositions between them, has yielded differing interpretations. We will return to those broad historical interpretations in the conclusion as well as to the reception of Clavijo's text, the gaps in its critical analysis, and its nature as a narrative.

Ruy González de Clavijo and the 1403–1406 Embassy

Scarcely anything is known about Ruy González de Clavijo's biography. He was born in Madrid and he was already a chamberlain (*camarero*) of King Henry III of Castile (r. 1390–1406) when he was selected to lead the embassy to Timur's court. After his return to Spain in March 1406, Clavijo resumed his role as chamberlain to Henry III until the latter's death on 25 December the same year. He served Juan II (r. 1406–1454) in the same capacity. Clavijo died on 2 April 1412 and was buried in a chapel he commissioned in 1406 at the monastery of San Francisco of Madrid.

King Henry III's embassy was the second he had sent to Timur. The first embassy left Spain at Easter in 1402, led by Payo Gómez de Sotomayor and Hernán Sánchez de Palazuelos. The ambassadors met Timur in Ankara following his victory over the Ottoman ruler Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402) and returned to Henry III, accompanied by one Muhammad al-Kashi, bearing a letter and gifts (which included two Christian women liberated from Bayezid's harem).[17] This was one of Timur's several contacts with European emissaries. Others Timur initiated himself—with the objective of finding alliances against the Ottomans—including exchanges with Charles VI of France, Henry IV of England, the Genoese, and the Venetians.[18]

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and 74–5. Also see Peter A. Andrews, *Felt Tents and Pavilions: The Nomadic Tradition and Its Interaction with Princely Tentage*, 2 vols. (London: Melisende, 1999).

[17] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 78–9, identifies these figures by name in his introductory pages to the narrative. Translations of the letter to King Henry III and other correspondence sent by Timur to European rulers are published in Lucien Kehren, trans. and commentary, *La route de Samarkand au temps de Tamerlan. Relation du voyage de l'ambassade de Castille à la cour de Timour Beg par Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo 1403–1406* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1990), 293–9.

[18] For others, see J. Delaville Le Roulx, "Rapports de Tamerlan avec les chrétiens," in *La France en Orient au XVIe siècle*, ed., J. Delaville Le Roulx, 2 vols. (Paris: E. Thorin, 1885–6), 1: 389–96; and Marie Mathilde Alexandrescu-Dersca, *La campagne de Timur en Anatolie* (Bucharest: Imperimeria Nationala, 1942), 19–29.

The second embassy sent by Henry III left the port of Santa María near Cadiz on 21 May 1403 with the intention of meeting Timur in Georgia. Clavijo was accompanied by the Dominican friar Alfonso Páez de Santa María, Gómez de Salazar of the Royal Guard (who died en route in Nishapur, 26 July 1404), Alfonso Fernández de Mesa, and others. The embassy probably numbered upwards of fifteen persons.[19] By 24 October 1403, the embassy had reached Constantinople where the envoys enjoyed the hospitality of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologus (r. 1391–1425). After six months, Clavijo and his companions left Constantinople on 20 March 1404 and arrived in Trebizond on 11 April. Because Timur had decamped from Georgia, the embassy now had to travel further than initially planned. Joined by Timur's officials, the embassy followed an overland route passing through Zigana, Torul, Erzincan, Erzurum, Surmari, Ararat, Maku, Khoy (where they were joined by an embassy from the Sultan of Egypt, al-Malik al-Nasir Faraj [r. 1399–1405]), Tabriz, Miyana, Zanjan, Sultaniyya, Tehran, Simnan, Firuzkuh, Damghan, Jajarm, Nishapur, Andkhoy, Balkh, Tirmidh and Kish (Shahr-i Sabz) before reaching Samarqand on 4 September 1404.[20] The embassy stayed in Samarqand until their dispatch by Timur on 21 November, only six days before Timur embarked on his military campaign against Ming China.[21]

In its structure, Clavijo's narrative resembles a fleshed out daily journal as he and his company traveled toward Samarqand, the final destination. The entries follow a linear chronological order and in most cases are enumerated day by day.[22] A broad variety of topics

[19] For more details about the embassy, see Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamórlan*, 29–32. Only two ambassadors are mentioned by name in Clavijo's text, Friar Alfonso Páez de Santa María and Gómez de Salazar.

[20] A slightly different route was taken on the return. For maps of both journeys, see Kehren, *La route de Samarkand*, 325–33. The Mamluk envoy is named in Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 425, as Mengli Buqa.

[21] Though Clavijo claims that they were sent away without seeing Timur, Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 449, suggests that Timur met with the European envoys, which he includes among other ambassadors remaining in Samarqand from the steppes of Dasht[-i Qipchaq] and Jata and other regions, before they left (*va sāir-i īlchīyān az bilād-i āfranj va dasht va jata va dīgar āṭrāf āmada būdand hama rā navāzash farmūda sar āfrāz va khwashdil bāz gardānīd*).

[22] López Estrada's edition of Clavijo's narrative was consulted for this essay. López Estrada based his study on the first published edition of the text by Gonzalo Argote de Molina, *Historia del Gran Tamorlán e Itinerario y Enarración del viage, y relación de la Embaxada que Ruy Gonçález de Clavijo le hizo…* (Seville: Encasa de Andrea Prescioni, 1582), and two manuscripts in the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid. For fur-

are covered, invariably treating aspects of the military and government, trade, farming, local customs, languages and their vernaculars. Occasionally the descriptive narrative is suspended for a discursus of a historical order, for example, when Clavijo presents a potted history of Timur's rise to power and rule.[23] In all these respects, Clavijo's narrative is entirely conventional. Super abundant description finds little or no subjective interpretation by which Clavijo might have sorted through and established the significance or meaning of what he witnessed: the act of witnessing is given primacy and his narrative's copious description is hence offered up to a reader as a vehicle for imaginary transport.[24]

The overriding impulse to describe one thing after the other—setting the scene of a physical environment before detailing what took place there, or doing both at the same time as successive vignettes of settings and actions—often leads to breakdowns in the narrative. Connections, especially spatial interrelations and coordinates, are often unclear. These breaks have the effect of supporting the claims of the text as an eye-witness account: it is as if the text were written in real time and not subjected to a complete editing. Every inconsistency and lacuna was not resolved after the fact to manufacture a seamless text. It is in these additional aspects that Clavijo's narrative develops by literary means an authenticity for its audience. Shifts of voice have the same effect—while some passages are written in the first person voice, the majority are presented in the voice of the first person plural, "We ambassadors," or "We, the said ambassadors."[25] This shifting subjective mode locates the acquisition of knowledge in vision and authorizes most of what is seen through

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ther details about López Estrada's edition, see Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 71–4. An edition of the narrative was published in 1782 by Antonio de Sancha. The English translations by Clements R. Markham, *Life and Acts of the Great Tamerlane: Narrative of the Castilian Embassy of Roy Gonsales de Clavijo, 1403–1406* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1859), and Guy Le Strange, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406* (London: Routledge, 1928), use the Spanish editions of Sancha and Molina, respectively.

[23] For the last, see Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 249–53.

[24] The primary reader was no doubt envisaged as King Henry III, but Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 79, indicates a wider audience when he states in the prologue that the book would record things that might otherwise be forgotten or lost (*por que no cayan en olvido e mejor e más verdaderamente se puedan contra e saber*).

[25] The process of composing the *Embajada a Tamorlán* is a topic that exceeds the scope of this paper. López Estrada has broached the topic, Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 40–6, though much more could be done. López Estrada also treated the issue of voice in Clavijo's narrative, 38–40.

the collective body of the embassy. From the moment the embassy arrived at Kish until it departed Samarqand, the primary content of the narrative from day to day is the life of the court to the virtual exclusion of all else. In this recounting, spectacle plays a central role whether it concerns processions of royal ladies, mounds of cooked meat, performing elephants, fabric architecture, or a portable mosque.

Architecture: Kish

The embassy arrived in "Quix" (Kish, also called Shahr-i Sabz) on 28 August 1404. After a general description of the city and its monuments, Clavijo notes that on the morning of 29 August, he and his company were taken to see "some great palaces" (*unos grandes palacios*), which they were told had been under construction for twenty years. What Clavijo designates with the word "palaces" had a wide entrance and high portal and near the entry on its left and right sides there were brick arches decorated with blue tiles. Beneath these arches "were something like small chambers which had no doors."[26] At some distance forward (from the chambers) there was another door and beyond it a great courtyard.[27] The courtyard was paved with white flagstones, enclosed on all sides by richly decorated doorways, had a large water tank at its center, and measured some 300 *pasos* (paces or feet) in width.[28] From this courtyard, which had a large and high portal, again worked in "beautifully made gold and blue and tiles," one entered into "a great body of houses" (*un grand cuerpo de casas*).[29] Clavijo remarks that the figures of a lion and sun

[26] *E so estos arcos estavan unas como cámaras pequeñas, sin puertas*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 247.

[27] *E luego, delante d'esta, estava otra puerta; e adelante d'ella, estava un grand corral*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 247.

[28] *...enlosada de losas blancas, e cercado todo alderredor de portales de obra muy rica. E en medio d'este corral estava una muy grand alberca de agua. E este corral era bien trezientos pasos en ancho*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 247. *Paso* can be understood as "pace" but it was probably closer to a foot in measurement (this estimate is based on the current width of the Aq Saray portal, which is closer to 300 feet than 300 paces). Problems of interpretation of the *paso* in Clavijo are mentioned by O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions," n. 41.

[29] *E d'este corral se entrava a un grand cuerpo de casas, el cual avía una portada muy grande e muy alta, labrada de oro e de azul e de azulejos, fechos a una obra bien fermosa*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 247.

decorated this portal and notes that this device was the arms of the former ruler of Samarqand. On the basis of this observation, Clavijo further asserts that this palace had been started before Timur's rule. This is one of the rare overt interpretations in the narrative where Clavijo makes a judgment of historical fact and presents an opinion on the matter.

The next section of the narrative describes the interior space of the "body of houses" reached by the portal on the courtyard. The ground floor is identified as a reception hall square in shape (*un recevimiento que era fecho en cuadra*) that also provided access to the upper floor (*unos sobrados*). The function of the chambers on the second floor, a series of "many rooms and apartments" (*tantas cámaras e apartamientos*), was identified as accommodation for Timur and his wives.[30] Again much information is provided about the decoration of these interior spaces. Moving on from there, the group of Spaniards reached a "square" (*cuadra*) that "his Highness has set apart for occupying and eating with his wives."[31] Beyond this square [building] lay a great "orchard" (*huerta*) planted with shade trees and many species of fruit-bearing trees and equipped with water tanks. Clavijo concludes by noting that the orchard provided enough space for many people to occupy it in the summer. This last observation is presumably a deduction of what kind of accommodations and spaces were suitable for seasonal use and, moreover, infers the temporary presence of tents in this capacious orchard during those months.

Structured through a physical itinerary of movement through space, Clavijo's narrative description is pieced together from successive snapshots of architectural elements—frequently elaborated by mention of their decoration, materials, or dimension—and whose relative spatial coordinates are sometimes given. But these coordinates do not add up to an evocation of a coherent architectural space, and physical linkages between elements are often inferred rather than nailed down, as in the relationship between the portal on the court and the "great corpus of houses" described after it.[32]

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[30] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 248.

[31] *…qu'el Señor avía apartada para estar e para comer con sus mugeres*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 248.

[32] Fully aware of the subjective and problematic nature of Guy Le Strange's English translation of Clavijo's narrative, Golombek and Wilber presented a new translation by Terry Allen of the passage relating to these "palaces" in Kish. See Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, 1: 273–4. It is quite clear from read-

Clavijo's description of these unnamed "palaces" has been identified with the palace of Aq Saray (White palace), built at the northern edge of the walled city of Shahr-i Sabz, its portal oriented toward the Zarafshan Mountains and Samarqand beyond them. But the only extant element of the palace, for which construction began in 1379, is the portal (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2). That is certainly monumental in size and revetted on all sides by polychrome, glazed tile work of various techniques. Nothing, however, is known of the arrangement of this structure in the area behind its main portal.

Of all the contexts of Timurid court life and ceremony, this is only one of five that Clavijo actually names with the word "palace" (*palacio*). As we will see, every subsequent site that he visited in the vicinity of Samarqand was designated by the paired terms "orchard and house" (*huerta e casa*).[33] The earliest Spanish dictionary, completed in 1611 by Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco (1539–1613), makes a clear distinction between these nouns. *Palacio* is defined as the home of the emperor or king from the Latin *palatium* and a law from the *Siete Partidas* of King Alfonso X's time (r. 1251–1265) is adduced to clarify further the function of the palace: "Palace is whichever place is said to be where the king gathers to speak with men. This is in three ways: to adjudicate disputes; for eating; and to speak wisely." Covarrubias Orozco defines the noun *casa* as: "A rustic, humble, poor habitation without foundation or firmness that is easily disassembled and thus some wish to use the word *casa* because whatever wind threatens to ruin it." That this is an older Spanish meaning is clarified by the passage following it: "Now [i.e. in 1611] in the Spanish language *casa* is taken to mean a habitation or dwelling place made with great firmness and sumptuousness. And the houses of rich men are called [this] in the plural, thus the houses of Sir so and so, or the houses of the duke, or the count, etc."[34]

From these definitions—and assuming that they are valid for Clavijo's time—it is possible to speculate that the principal features

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ing Le Strange that he made deductions from Clavijo's text that he then inserted into the translation but without indicating so. The obvious purpose was to render a seamless translation intelligible to a general reader by limiting the incoherence brought about by the frequent narrative breakdown in the original Clavijo manuscript.

[33] *Huerta* is translated throughout this essay as 'orchard' but these spaces were clearly also 'gardens' being planted with flowers and herbaceous plants.

[34] Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (Barcelona: Editorial Alta Fulla, 1998).

Fig. 3.1. Entrance portal of the Aq Saray, Shahr-i Sabz, Uzbekistan, c. 1379–96, view 1. Photo: David J. Roxburgh.

Fig. 3.2. Entrance portal of the Aq Saray, Shahr-i Sabz, Uzbekistan, c. 1379–96, view 2. Photo: David J. Roxburgh.

identifying the Aq Saray as a "palace" were its reception hall and its monumental form. Clavijo's use of the phrase "*unos grandes palacios*" though possibly signifying "palace" in the plural, could equally refer to a single palace ensemble which belonged to a very eminent patron, a profile applicable to Timur. It is equally possible that the "grand corpus of houses," which he later designates as "palaces," were not contiguous to the arcaded courtyard, but set beyond it as an independent two-storied structure adjacent to the orchard.[35] His choice of the term "house" (*casa*) seems to mark a place that could be occupied, but that was of smaller size and less permanent. The gaps in Clavijo's narrative allow several possible reconstructions for the Aq Saray, a "building" that may well have amounted to a massive and permanent architectural frame set beyond the portal. A portion of the Aq Saray's inner space was planted with an orchard, possibly set with freestanding buildings, but certainly a site that could be prepared for short-term occupation and use by the erection of tented structures and other soft architectural forms.

Whatever the case, when Clavijo and his companions visited the Aq Saray they saw something incomplete. Timur was not in residence and the interior spaces of his palace had not been outfitted with the sumptuous array of textiles that played such an all important role at the Timurid court.[36] This fundamental aspect of the Timurid court setting would become as clear to Clavijo and his companions later in their journey as it was to their contemporary Jean, Archbishop of Sultaniyya.[37] In his tract on Timur composed in 1403 under the section listing "The things that Timur Beg likes more than any other," Jean of Sultaniyya lists: "Firstly, fine and delicate textiles, especially of the colors of fine seed and crimson; *item* [textiles] the

[35] The problems associated with hypothetical reconstructions of this ensemble are also discussed by Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, 1: 274. Though they based their analysis on Allen's new translation, O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions," 252, later questioned their architectural reconstruction.

[36] For a general treatment of the role of textiles at Islamic courts and their broad relationships to architecture see the now classic article by Lisa Golombek, "The Draped Universe of Islam," in *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World*, ed., Priscilla P. Soucek (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 25–38.

[37] Jean of Sultaniyya arrived in Paris in 1403 to inform the King of France Charles VI (r. 1386–1422), about Timur's victory over Bayezid in 1402. During his visit to Paris, Jean of Sultaniyya composed a short treatise in French on Timur. See Jean of Sultaniyya, "Mémoire sur Tamerlan," 433–64. Further details about Jean of Sultaniyya are presented in Kehren, *La route de Samarkand*, 50–2.

color of pink; *item* fine [textiles] of the colors white and green; delicate cloth as those from Rains [Rheims]; *item* branches of coral; *item* a coral tree; *item* cups of crystal and other vessels ornamented with gold and silver; …. ; *item* noble tapestries like those in France; … and of all those things he is well provided."[38] Jean of Sultaniyya itemizes all those appurtenances of Timur's palaces—furniture, objects, textiles—that Clavijo would himself see in abundance in Samarqand and eventually understand as integral to the settings of Timurid courtly life.

Courtly Life and Ceremony: Samarqand's "Orchards and Houses"

When Clavijo and his company had been given permission to leave Kish, they did so on the afternoon of Friday, 29 August. The next day, Saturday 30 August, they arrived at one of Timur's grand houses which was surrounded by an orchard and built on a plain beside a river. After dinner, they left for another village named "Meser" (Misr) where the embassy spent the night.[39] The next morning, Sunday 31 August, they received permission to approach Samarqand. In the early afternoon, the embassy was taken to an orchard which Clavijo calls Talicia but that "in their tongue" (*en su lengua*) was called "Chalbelecet" (Khalvat, lit. Privacy) garden.[40] The embassy would stay there until 8 September when Timur finally called on them. Clavijo describes the various fruit and shade trees planted in the "Chalbelecet" orchard, its tanks of water, and a large artificial mound of earth at its center from which one could view the orchard. This mound was surmounted by "a grand palace" (*unos grandes palacios*) with many decorated rooms. It was in the orchard, however, that a tent was set up for the ambassadors to occupy.[41]

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[38] Jean of Sultaniyya, "Mémoire sur Tamerlan," 463–4. In the text '*item*' signifies 'ditto.'

[39] A later visitor to Samarqand, Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur, in 1497 includes a reference to Misr (lit. 'Egypt,' but probably meaning Cairo), among other suburbs around the city of Samarqand which were named after cities that Timur had either conquered or wished to conquer (Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Shiraz, and Sultaniyya). See Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*, 1: 176.

[40] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 255. Khalvat has been identified as Gul Bagh (Rose garden), a garden mentioned in the Persian sources.

[41] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 254–5.

On the day the embassy left the orchard at the village of Misr, Clavijo writes: "And from there until the city there was a plain of orchards and houses and squares where they sold many things; and at nine in the morning we came to a great orchard and a house where his Highness was, which was outside the city."[42] When they reached the entrance to the orchard they were stopped and asked to hand over their gifts.[43] They were then taken into the orchard, two attendants flanking each member of the embassy with their arms placed under the Spaniards' armpits—this was a common means of controlling visitors by constraining their movement. The embassy was led forward and passed six elephants carrying "wooden castles" (*castillos de madera*, i.e. howdahs) and standards. The attendants made the elephants perform tricks. A succession of raised platforms followed on which sat Timur's nephew, identified by Clavijo as the son of "Miraxa Miraza" (Miranshah, 1367–1408). Other Timurid princes sat there as well. The princes requested the letter that Clavijo had brought from King Henry III and it was passed from them into the hands of the son of Miraxa Miraza (i.e. Khalil Sultan, 1384–1411, Timur's nephew). After these courtly protocols, the embassy was allowed to move forward and came before Timur.

"And his Majesty was in something like a portal which was before the door of the entrance to beautiful houses."[44] A basin contained water that shot up into the air with red apples floating below, while beyond it Timur sat on small mattresses covered with rich textiles and cushions. The ambassadors then moved forward performing a series of three bowing and kneeling movements, arms crossed over the chest, and still held under their armpits by Timur's attendants. The Spaniards remained in a kneeling posture on the third movement. This was another prescribed ritual choreography of the

[42] *E de allí fasta la ciudat era un llano de huertas e casas e plaças onde vendían muchas cosas; e a ora de tercia llegaron a una grand huerta e casa onde el Señor estava, que era fuera de la ciudat*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 257.

[43] These gifts are specifically mentioned by Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 422. Among them were pieces of textile, "the designs and patterns of which were woven in such a way that if Mani's brush were to flow across the Artangi tablet, it would fall short in a hundred ways of depicting their likes." See Wheeler M. Thackston, trans., *A Century of Princes: Sources on Timurid Art and History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1988), 90.

[44] *E el Señor estava en uno como portal que estava ante la puerta de la entrada de unas fermosas casas*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 259.

Turco-Mongol court, termed *ūljāmishī* in Mongolian.[45] A double-page painting from a later illustrated copy of Yazdi's *Ẓafarnāma* depicts Timur holding audience before a row of men who adopt this kneeling posture of respect (Fig. 3.3).

After the *ūljāmishī* ritual, the Turco-Mongol attendants withdrew and Timur ordered Clavijo and his companions to move closer to him and to stand there: Clavijo was standing close enough to observe Timur's sagging eyelids. A short verbal exchange ensued in which Timur asked after Henry III. The dragoman (translator) offered to read out loud the official letter which was in Timur's possession, but Timur indicated his preference to learn of the letter's contents in private. After the official exchange was accomplished, the members of the embassy were seated in preparation for a great feast. They were given preferential treatment over the Chinese ambassadors also present at this audience.

Like all other feasts Clavijo attended, this one is described at great length. The bewildering array of detail overwhelms the reader as he attempts to imagine this remote world and sort through the various claims it makes on the senses. Clavijo's recounting of the feast is presented in a sequential order of events and includes such details as the means of transporting food to the banquet by large leather trays equipped with handles and so heavily laden that they had to be pulled across the ground; the bowls and jugs of gold and silver; and the food, mostly boiled and roasted meats, some prepared as a stew, as well as fruit (melons, grapes, and peaches). The feast was finished off with a drink of mare's milk with sugar (*leche de yeguas con azúcar*), which he observes "is a good drink that they make in the summer time" (*que es buen bebraje que ellos fazen para en tiempo de verano*).[46] The Spaniards then left the orchard and were assigned to the care of a "gentleman" (*cavallero*) who was identified as Timur's chief doorkeeper (*portero mayor del Señor*).[47] It is only at the conclusion of this narrative passage that we learn the name of the orchard and the house where Clavijo first met Timur, "Delicuxan" (Bagh-i Dilgusha, or Heart's delight garden). Clavijo notes as an aside that "In this orchard were many tents draped with panels of silk and in other

[45] The obliged ritual of *ūljāmishī* is mentioned in Yazdi's *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 426, relating to Pir Muhammad's arrival at Timur's court.

[46] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 264.

[47] This is probably the 'chamberlain' (*ḥājib*).

manners,"[48] and that Timur stayed here until the following Friday when he departed for "another orchard and very beautiful house which he had ordered to be built and which was named Beheginar."[49] This orchard is identifiable as the Bagh-i Chinar (Plane tree garden) of the Persian sources.

The next Monday, 15 September, Timur left the Bagh-i Chinar for yet another orchard and house which were also of great beauty. The ambassadors were invited to another feast to be held there. The entrance to the orchard was very grand and high, its brick fabric decorated with tiles of blue and gold. Inside there were many trees, that provided fruit or shade, and "streets and walkways lined with wood, by which people walked. And in this orchard there were many tents put up and awnings of colored tapestries and other silken cloths of many colors, some with designs, and others plain."[50] At the center of the orchard there was a building in the shape of a cross (*casa en cruz*) whose interior, arranged as three alcoves, was furnished with hangings. The chief alcove stood on axis with the entrance and had a screen of silver and gilt with a bed set before it. All around were wall hangings of red silk. The description provides many other details of the interior and how it was decorated and furnished, including a table set with ewers and cups of precious metals encrusted with precious stones and pearls.[51]

By the time they arrived for the feast, Timur and his company had already eaten. Their late arrival made Timur angry and he blamed the dragoman for the confusion. The dragoman narrowly escaped the designated punishment of having his nose pierced like a pig. Clavijo mentions that their late arrival also meant that they "did not see the said house and orchard or its apartments," but that later "some of them went into it to see it and appreciate it."[52] This

[48] *E en esta huerta estavan muchas tiendas, armadas de paños de seda e de otras maneras*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 264.

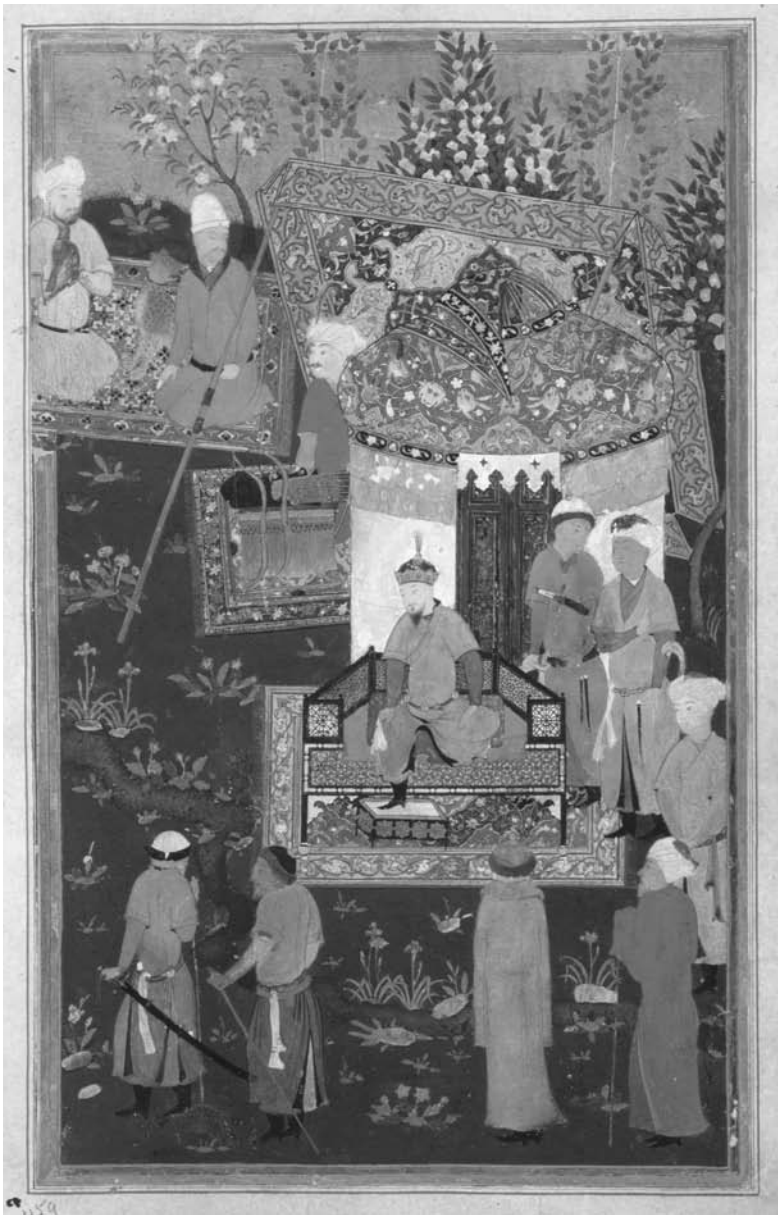
[49] *…otra huerta e casa muy rica qu'él mandava agora fazer, que avía nombre Beheginar*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 264.

[50] *…e por ella avía unas calles e andanes cercados de madera, por do andava la gente. E en esta huerta avía muchas tiendas armadas e sombras de tapete colorado e otros paños de seda e de otras muchos color's, d'ellas entretalladas e de otras maneras llanas*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 265.

[51] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 265–6.

[52] *… no vieron esta dicha casa e huerta ni los aparejamientos d'ella, viéronla algunos de los sus omnes, que les fue mostrada, e metidos en ella a que la viesen e mirasen*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 267.

Fig. 3.3. "Timur granting an audience in Balkh on the occasion of his accession to power in April 1370," from a *Ẓafarnāma* (Book of Victory) of Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi, copied by Shir ʿAli, 1467–48 CE (872 AH), fols. 82b–83a. Johns Hopkins



University, Milton S. Eisenhower Library, John Work Garrett Collection. Photo: The John Work Garrett Library, the Sheridan Libraries, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

portion of the narrative further reveals the experiential testimony of several witnesses—and not the single subject Clavijo—which was coordinated into the final text.[53] For the events of 15 September a detailed description of the building located at the center of the unnamed orchard precedes our being informed that because of their late arrival to the feast some members of the embassy visited the house and grounds later. Occasional pieces of information about things seen by the Spaniards were clearly supplied later and then incorporated into the written document. Though it appears to be mostly a real-time narrative, written as a daily journal, the final text incarnates various temporalities, some of them retrospective. The order of happening does not dictate the sequence of telling.

The itinerary continues by recording that Timur on 22 September left this orchard for another "which was a house and orchard like this one" (*que era así casa e huerta como ésta*). This orchard was enclosed by a wall, square in plan, with round and large towers at its corners. The entrance was tall and made like the other entrances to the orchards. At the center of the orchard stood a large house shaped like a cross with a great water tank. This house was larger than the others in the orchards they had visited and was still more ornate. The name of this house and orchard was "Bagueno" (Bagh-i Naw, New garden).[54] The remainder of Clavijo's description here narrates the feast that was ordered and the customs associated with wine drinking under the Timurids. Clavijo writes that the men who drank the most earned the title "bahaduher" (the Persian title *bahādur* from the Mongolian word *bağatur* meaning 'hero') and that only after the drinking had ended was the food brought in.[55] The feast culminated with the ambassadors being showered with silver coins (referenced in the Spanish as *tangites*; Persian *tanka*) and bestowed with "robes of brocade" (*ropas de camocan*). Both practices—gifting guests with precious robes and strewing them with coins (the latter practice is termed

[53] My reading of the itinerary is distinct from the English translation by Le Strange. He made interpolations to Clavijo's narrative, particularly by identifying the unnamed orchards in an effort to clarify the successive movements from one orchard to the next.

[54] For the pages detailing the Bagh-i Naw, see Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 267–8.

[55] For further information about Clavijo's accounts of wine drinking and other practices of the Timurids, see David J. Roxburgh, "Timurlu Minyatürlerinde Şarap: 'Sâki, Bize Âb-ı Hayat Ver,'" *P Dünya Sanatı Dergisi* 40 (2006): 116–29.

nithār in Persian)—were time-honored traditions of the Islamic royal court.[56]

The next day, 23 September, Timur moved to another house and orchard close to the Bagh-i Dilgusha (*otra casa e huerta que era cerca d'ésta, que ha nombre Delicaxan*) for another feast to which the ambassadors were invited. This house and orchard were also very beautiful, and the rituals of wine drinking and eating were here repeated. The ambassadors were again given robes of brocade before "returning to their abodes, which were very close to where his Majesty was."[57] Though the proximity of the two sites is interesting, perhaps even more so is the way that Clavijo's text informs his reader of their spatial position relative to each other. The reader is not given a cardinal direction which he might use to make a mental map but rather an impression of closeness through the temporal dimension, of the little time taken to journey from one orchard to the other.

Before continuing with the narrative of Clavijo's visit it is useful here to address key aspects of his text thus far. On Monday 8 September the ambassadors left their lodgings in the vicinity of the village of Misr for the Bagh-i Dilgusha where they saw tents and Timur "seated before something like a portal" and "beautiful houses;" on Friday 12 September, Timur left the Bagh-i Dilgusha for the Bagh-i Chinar; on Monday 15 September, Timur left the Bagh-i Chinar for an unnamed orchard where there was a cross-shaped building as well as tents and awnings; on Monday 22 September, Timur left the unnamed orchard for the Bagh-i Naw where there was also a cross-shaped building, the largest of all those seen by Clavijo; and on Tuesday 23 September, Timur left the Bagh-i Naw for another unnamed orchard close to the Bagh-i Dilgusha.[58]

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[56] The general term used in the Persian language sources to reference gift-giving is *pīshkash*.

[57] … *e desí tornáronse a sus posadas, que eran bien cerca donde el Señor estava*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 269.

[58] Yazdi also describes Timur's itinerary after his return to Samarqand in July 1404. Timur stopped first in the Bagh-i Chinar—Saray Mulk Khanim and Tuman Agha came to the Bagh-i Chinar and Bagh-i Bihisht (Paradise garden), respectively—and then he moved to the Bagh-i Shimal (North garden). Next he moved to the Bagh-i Buland (Exalted garden) followed by entry into the city of Samarqand to visit the madrasa-mausoleum complex that he had commissioned to be built for his predeceased grandson Muhammad Sultan. After that he moved to the madrasa of Saray Mulk Khanim in Samarqand and thence to the Bagh-i Chinar and after that to the Bagh-i Dilgusha. The itinerary ended with a "feast" (*tūy*) in another garden where

The ambassadors were based at one primary site and were invited intermittently to join Timur and his retinue at these various orchards located outside and around the walled city of Samarqand for specific choreographed events. In every case, the architecture of these sites is described consistently by the relatively indeterminate word "house" (*casa*), hence distinct from the term *palacio* which Clavijo used previously to reference the Aq Saray in Shahr-i Sabz and "Talicia" at Misr outside Samarqand's city walls. Some of these "houses" located in the orchard are described in plan and location.

A shared typology emerges, of a square, walled orchard marked by an entrance and enclosing various plantings, especially trees, often with cross-shaped buildings erected at their center. In others, such as the Bagh-i Dilgusha, we learn of tents and unspecified houses. For most examples, Clavijo describes the furniture and textile components of the "houses," noting the many mattresses, cushions, and wall hangings that decked the interior and exterior spaces. In every case it is difficult to imagine the scale or scope of 'hard' architecture. With the exception of the outer walls, their corner towers, and the ornate entrance portals, the only fixed elements appear to have been free-standing structures which were in every case draped in textiles. The principal Persian source to reference these palaces and gardens—Yazdi's *Ẓafarnāma*—attests to the presence of permanent architectural elements and materials of stone, brick, and tile. However, Yazdi was not an eye-witness and wrote his text fifteen to twenty years after Clavijo. It was the evanescent elements of these courtly settings that impressed Clavijo and his companions the most and in some instances these cloth elements resembled permanent architecture. The intentional simulation of permanent architecture in temporary forms would be more fully developed in Clavijo's next sequence of narrative which recounts the courtly gatherings staged on the Kan-i Gil meadow.

Timur's Quriltāy at Kan-i Gil

The next section of Clavijo's narrative relates that while all these movements had been taking place from orchard to orchard over the span of a little more than two weeks, Timur had ordered an

Timur met the "Frankish ambassadors" (*īlchīyān-i āfranj*). See Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 420–2.

"assembly" (*quriltāy*) on the meadow of Kan-i Gil to the east of Samarqand. Though the primary function of this *quriltāy* (Mongolian: assembly of nobles, council, jamboree) was to celebrate the marriages of the Timurid princes—including Ulugh Beg, Ibrahim Sultan, Ejil, Ahmad, Sidi-Ahmad, and Bayqara—it satisfied a myriad of functions. Others included Timur's triumphant return to Samarqand after six years of campaigns, the submission of the "horde" (*ordū*) and members of the ruling house to Timur, the execution of justice, the display of the imperial capital's economic wealth, and the reception of various envoys and ambassadors. Failure to attend the *quriltāy* would be read as potentially seditious behavior and could possibly result in retribution. When Malik Ghiyath al-Din Kart, the ruler of Herat, failed to attend a *quriltāy* ordered by Timur in 1380, Timur besieged and then captured the city.[59]

Clavijo's narrative associated with the *quriltāy* of 1404 begins by noting that Timur ordered tents to be erected for him and his wives in the Kan-i Gil. Timur also ordered that "all the entourage" (*toda la hueste*) should come in from the orchards and various areas where it was stationed to assemble at Kan-i Gil. Members of the horde came with their wives and set up their tents. The tents were arranged not in an arbitrary fashion but according to the proper status and place of their occupants. After three or four days, Clavijo estimates there were some 20,000 tents. The horde also brought with it butchers and cooks, vendors of barley and fruit, and bakers with their ovens, who were all positioned within the encampment in a remarkable order: "every one arranged according to marked streets" (*e todos ordenados por calles señaladas*). There were also baths and bathhouse owners established among the horde who assembled tents and iron baths filled with water.[60]

The logistics of organizing such a gathering would have benefited from the skills of two military officers of the Timurid court, the *yurtchï* (camp maker) and the *tovachï* (troop inspector). The *yurtchï* was entrusted the task of finding grounds for setting up the camp and its tents, and the *tovachï* was responsible—among other tasks—for overseeing "the construction of buildings, dividing booty, organizing

[59] Beatrice F. Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 70.

[60] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 270.

camp grounds, and helping with the arrangement of feasts."[61] *Tovachï*s were ostensibly organizers. At Kan-i Gil, the *quriltāy* took place in a setting comparable to that of an "army camp" (*ordū*), though some scholars have suggested that the *quriltāy* was imbued with a festive rather than military tone.[62] In Clavijo's narrative, *ordo* carries two senses, referencing the horde and also the army camp. In Turco-Mongol usage *ordū* signified the army camp.

The ambassadors were relocated to another house and orchard belonging to Timur and located closer to the royal camp at Kan-i Gil. On the following Monday, 29 September, Timur left the Kan-i Gil for Samarqand and took up occupancy in some "houses" built near the city wall which he had ordered built in honor of Saray Mulk Khanim's mother who was buried in a chapel there.[63] On that day Timur ordered a feast to which the Spanish ambassadors were invited and which was held to receive the "ambassadors who had come from a land which borders the land of the emperor of China."[64] Clavijo's narrative gives a compelling account of these ambassadors' curious headgear and clothing, which was made of furs, and of the special furs they presented to Timur as a gift. A few days later on 2 October, the Spaniards were ordered to go to another orchard where their guardian (i.e. Timur's chief doorkeeper) lived.

The next dated entry is for 6 October when Timur ordered a great feast "in the field where they had camped his horde, which

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[61] Manz, *Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*, 174. Describing the construction of the tented appurtenances of the Kan-i Gil *quriltāy*, Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 424, mentions an army of men whose responsibility it was to set up tents, spread carpets, etc. (Persian: *farrāsh*; pl. *farrāshān*). For *tovachï*, also see Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1963–1975), 1: 260–4.

[62] Peter Alford Andrews, "The Tents of Timur: An Examination of the Reports on the Qiriltay at Samarqand, 1404," *Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia* 7 (1977): 143–87; 144. 'Military' and 'festive' were not mutually exclusive. For example, after Timur's defeat of his elusive rival Toqtamish Khan in 1391, Yazdi writes: "the camp was pitched for the royal descent, a majestic and awesome *sarāparda* was set up encircling the plain, and inside it the dome of the victorious court was raised to the apex of the heavens." This "verdant royal camp" served as the site for a victory celebration which lasted for twenty-six days. See Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 394–7. The translation is by Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 83–4.

[63] The building is identified by architectural historians as the madrasa-mausoleum of Saray Mulk Khanim. It faced the Friday mosque Timur had built just inside Samarqand's Iron Gate.

[64] …*embaxadores que a él venían de una tierra que confina con la tierra e señorío del Catay*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 271.

they call royal."[65] Events here would occupy Clavijo and his company until 24 October—the last feast mentioned occurred on 23 October, but lasted all night into the morning of the next day.

Many people were invited to the feast on 6 October, including Timur's entire family and the ambassadors. When they came to the *ordū* they "found many beautiful tents, one after the other, and the most [beautiful] of them were on the riverbank, and it was a very beautiful thing to see."[66] The ambassadors were brought forward and asked to rest for a while beneath an awning (*sombra*) of white linen decorated with panels of other colored stuff held up by wooden poles. Comparable structures are illustrated in near contemporary manuscript paintings, such as an example depicting Timur's grandson Ulugh Beg enthroned beneath a white canopy decorated with a text in blue and supported by an armature of red colored poles (Fig. 3.4). Ulugh Beg's wives and a retinue of attendants, including guards, food bearers, and falconers, are positioned along one side.

From his vantage point under the white linen awning, Clavijo remarks:

> Near these awnings was a great pavilion which was made like a tent except that it was four-squared. And it was as high as three lances and more. And the skirts of it did not reach the ground, [and were] about a lance [in height from the ground]. And it was one hundred feet wide. And it had four corners, and the center of it was round like a vault and they built it over twelve trees as thick as a man's chest. And they were painted blue and gold and other colors.[67]

This main pavilion was enclosed by another square-shaped wall of cloth fashioned like porticoes. The interior of the pavilion was outfitted with the customary hanging colored textiles, some embroidered with gold. The exterior of the pavilion was covered with bands of colored silk, white, black, and yellow. At each corner, the high

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[65] *…en el campo onde tenían puesto su ordo, que dizen por real.* Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 272.

[66] *…fallaron muchas tiendas bien fermosas, e las más d'ellas estavan riberas del río, e bien parecían fermosas de ver, e estavan juntas muchas, unas con otras*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 272–3.

[67] *E cerca d'estas sombras estava un grand pavellón, el cual era fecho como tienda, salvo que era cuadrada; e era tan alto como tres lanças de armas e más; e las faldas d'él no llegavan al suelo cuanto podia ser una lança; e avía en ancho fasta cient pasos. E avía cuatro esquinas, e el cielo d'él era redondo como bóveda, e armábase sobre doze árboles, tan gruesos cada uno como un omne en los pechos; e eran pintados de azul e de oro e de otras colores*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 273.

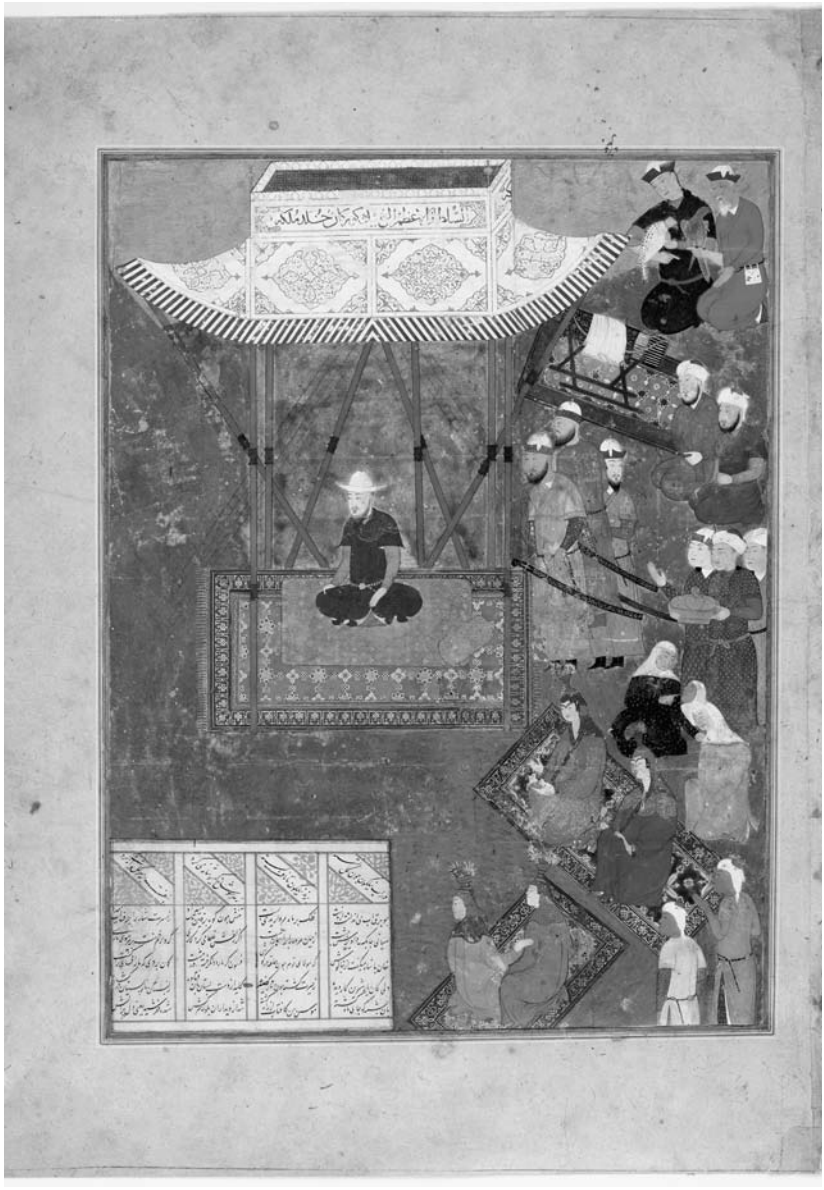

Fig. 3.4. "The court of Ulugh Beg," c. 1440. Freer Gallery of Art, no. 46.26. Photo: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., Purchase, F1946.26.

wooden poles were capped with a copper apple and figure of the moon.

> And at the top of this pavilion among the staves there was a tower with battlements of silk cloth of many types with a door by which you entered into it… And it was so high that from far away it seemed a castle; so grand and high and wide was this pavilion that it was a strange thing to see. There was so much beauty in this pavilion that I am not able to describe it.[68]

Finished with the description of this monumental pavilion, the text moves on to an element enclosing it:

> And near this pavilion there was a fence like those of a town or castle of silk cloth of many colors with battlements above and with cords that were outside and inside and by which they tied it down. And inside there were some poles that held it up. This wall was round and it was almost as wide as 300 feet, and the wall was very high, about the height of a man on horseback. And there was a very high entrance in the form of an arch with doors inside. And outside of the work itself, which was the wall, that [portal] was closed and opened; and above the portal there was a square tower with battlements.[69]

Clavijo ends this description by identifying the circular component as a "calaparada" (Persian *sarāparda*, lit. a curtain or an enclosing wall made of cloth). These were walls fashioned from cloth that functioned as barriers to divide inner from outer spaces.

These practices of arranging pavilions, tents, and awnings together in enclosures formed by cloth walls (*sarāparda*) are rarely visualized in pictorial form. One uncommon illustration in a copy of Yazdi's *Ẓafarnāma* dated 1486 depicts an image of Timur enthroned on a litter throne as he is entertained by female dancers and male and female musicians (Figs. 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7). Rows of standing and seated figures join Timur for this *al fresco* entertainment while behind

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[68] *E encima d'este pabellón, entre estos dichos maderos, estava una torre con almenas de paños de seda de muchas maneras, con una puerta por do entravan a ella…. Así era tan alto que de lexos parescía castillo, e tan grande e tan alto e tan ancho era este pabellón que era una estraña cosa de ver. E mucho más de fermosura avía este pavellón, que no se podía escrevir*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 274–5.

[69] *E acerca d'este pavellón estava una cerca así como de villa o castillo, de paños de seda de muchas colores, entretallados de muchas maneras, con almenas encima, e con cuerdas de parte de fuera e de dentro que la tiravan; e de dentro avía unos maderos que los tenían. Esta cerca era redonda, e podia ser tan ancha como trezientos pasos, e la pared, muy alta, cuanto sería un omne de cavallo. E avía una puerta muy alta, fecha en arco, con puertas adentro. E afuera de la obra mesma, que era la cerca que se cerrava e abría; e encima de la portada, estava una torre cuadrada con almenas*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 275.

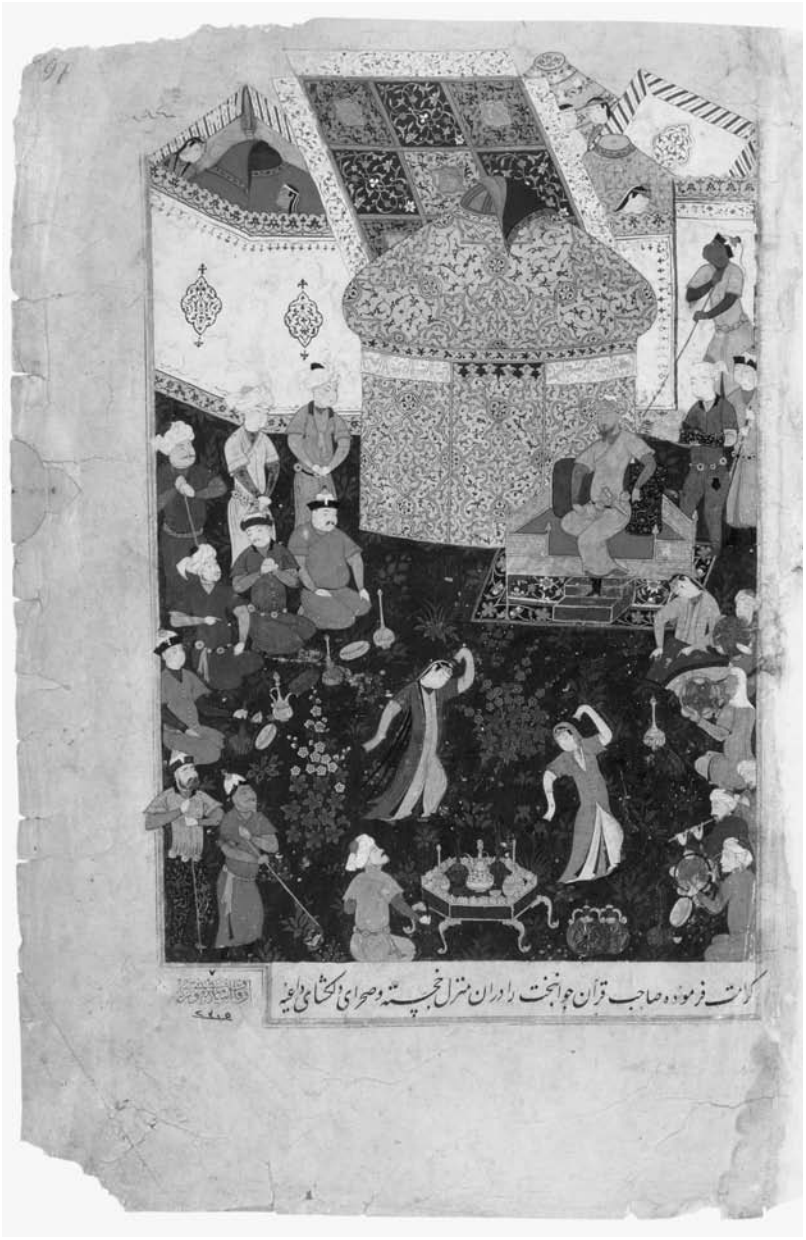

Fig. 3.5. Timur enthroned with musicians and dancers. *Ẓafarnāma* (Book of Victory) of Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi, copied by Hamd Allah b. Murshid al-Katib, 1486 CE (891 AH), Iran, fol. 97a. Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi, Istanbul, no. 1964. Photo: Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art, Istanbul.

the group one sees a trellis tent covered with patterned textiles, a broad awning covered with patterned textile panels arranged in a grid, and then a white *sarāparda* decorated with blue borders and medallions. A number of trellis tents and other awnings are set up inside the *sarāparda* enclosure where women are seen moving freely through the cloth-walled space.

Inside the *sarāparda* at the Kan-i Gil, and in addition to the main pavilion, there were many tents and awnings (*tiendas e sombras armadas*) of various types. The tallest was circular in shape and did not use guys to stabilize it. Its structure was fashioned from poles as long and thick as lances and the fabric stretched over it. The top fabric was colored red but the lower walls were covered in an unadorned white. This tent had a tall doorway fashioned from small canes and covered in red textile.[70] "And near this said tent was another very richly ornamented one which they tied down with cords and it was of a red cloth of velvet. And then there were another four tents close to each other and one passes from one to the next, and one goes as if there were a street in the middle of them and they were covered over."[71] Nearby this grouping of tents there was yet another cluster of tents enclosed by a textile "made to appear as if a frieze of tiles."[72] This cloth enclosure was punctuated by "open windows with their shutters" (*ventanas abiertas con sus puertas*). A tall tent, of the same type as before (without guys), stood at the center of this second enclosure.

Clavijo identifies the first and second enclosures as belonging to the wives of Timur, his chief wife Saray Mulk Khanim and his second wife "Guichicano" (Kuchuk Khanim). In their vicinity he describes yet a third enclosure and its tents and awnings and concludes by counting eleven such enclosures in this area. These

[70] *E avía una puerta alta, con puertas de una cañas menudillas, cubiertas de tapete colorado*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 276.

[71] *E cerca d'esta dicha tienda, estava otra bien rica, que la tiravan cuerdas; e era de un tapete colorado de vellud. E otrosí estavan luego otras cuatro tiendas, juntas unas con otras, que se passavan de una a otra, e iva una como calle por medio d'ellas, e eran cubiertas encima.* Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 276.

[72] *por tal manera fecho que parecía como lizero de azulejos*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 276. The color, scope of decoration, and range of fabrics used for the tents signal sedentary and not nomadic production. See Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange*, 75; and Andrews, "Tents of Timur," 144. The production of tents—their textiles and poles—are mentioned in a later progress report summarizing the status of works under way in the "workshop" (*kitābkhāna*) in Timurid Herat. See Thackston, trans., *Century of Princes*, 323–7, 326–7.

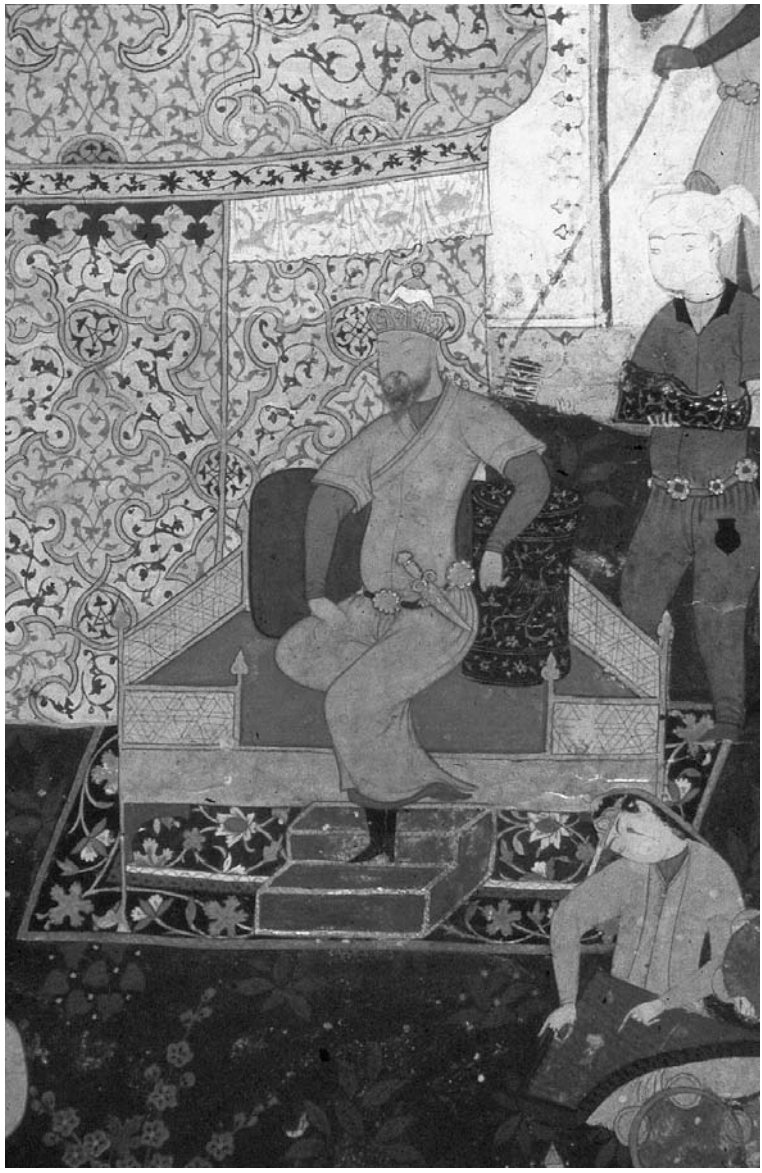

Fig. 3.6. Timur on throne. Detail of Fig. 3.5. Photo: Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art, Istanbul.

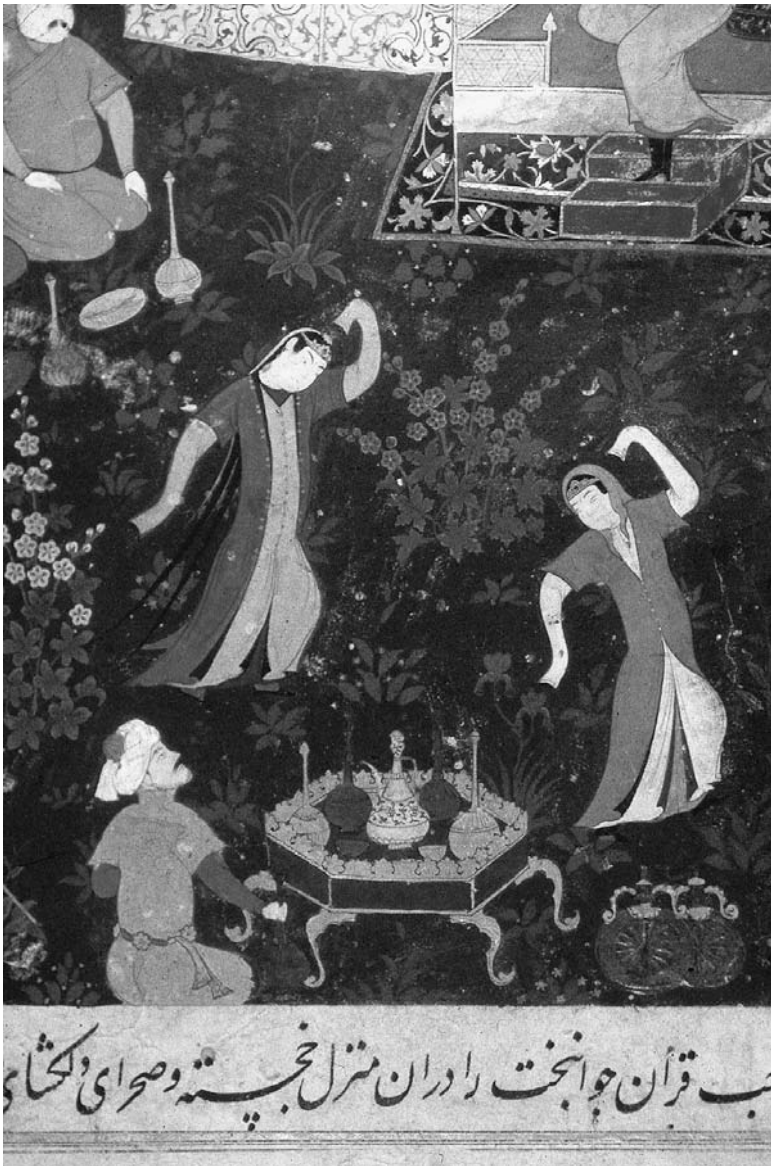

Fig. 3.7. Female dancers. Detail of Fig. 3.5. Photo: Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art, Istanbul.

enclosures belonged to the wives of Timur or to the wives of his "grandsons" (*nietos*) and Clavijo writes that they lived in them in both winter and summer. It is even possible that the Timurid women themselves played a supervisory role in the erection of their separate living quarters—one of the responsibilities given to women during campaign was that of setting up the *ordū*.[73]

On 6 October, Timur left his enclosure and came to the great pavilion for a feast attended by the ambassadors. On 7 October, another feast was held in one of the enclosures Clavijo had described—he does not specify which. On October 8, a strong wind prevented Timur from attending another feast. On October 9, the ambassadors were invited to yet another feast hosted by "Anzada" the chief wife of Miraza Miraxa (Khanzada, d. 1411, wife of Miranshah).[74] This was likewise held in an enclosure with a tent—when the ambassadors approached the tents they saw "many jars of wine" (*muchas jarras de vino*) arranged on the ground.[75] Later on, wine was taken from these jars and served to the company of guests.

Clavijo's account of this feast is replete with all kinds of details about the seating arrangements, the guests, the forms of entertainment, the "Busa" (a sweetened mare's milk) that they drank, and the intricate procedures of wine drinking. He offers a detailed account of how wine was presented to Khanzada and her female companions in small golden cups carried on golden trays. Facing Khanzada, the servers carrying these cups performed three kneeling movements on their right knee, standing on one spot and without moving forward. It was only then that other servants lifted the cups from the trays, white cloths preventing the servers from touching the precious metal, and presented them, again in a kneeling position, to Khanzada and the other women. They then withdrew, all the while facing the royal assembly.[76] Clavijo notes that this service took place over time and

[73] Soucek, "Timurid Women," 202. Andrews, "Tents of Timur," 152, proposed that the allocation of separate living quarters to Timur's wives may reflect a continuity of Mongol practice. Each wife of Batu Khan (c. 1205–1255) owned her own tents and vehicles to transport them. See M.Ş. İpşiroğlu, *Painting and Culture of the Mongols*, trans., E.D. Phillips (New York: Abrams, 1966), 27.

[74] It was not uncommon for high-ranking women of the Timurid house to host their own feasts. Indeed, in life they assumed a broad range of official responsibilities. See Soucek, "Timurid Women," passim.

[75] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 279.

[76] At another feast, members of the elite approached Timur by a series of kneeling movements and were presented by him with a wine-filled cup. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 292.

involved several refillings of the womens' cups as well as the womens' ordering the servants to drink cups filled with wine. They did the last to amuse Khanzada and her company. In addition to wine, the women also drank the sweetened mare's milk. Clavijo concludes the narrative by writing that men in their company were drunk (*beúdos sobarcados*) and that this was expected. Following Turco-Mongolian custom, food was served only after the drinking had been completed. Clavijo reports this excessive drinking and its practice across the male and female genders at the Timurid court without overt judgment. It is altogether unclear whether or not he viewed what he witnessed as scandalous.

Timur also invited the ambassadors to a feast on 9 October to celebrate the marriage of one of his grandsons. Saray Mulk Khanim and Khanzada were also present. To further celebrate the day, Timur ordered that all the traders and craftsmen from the city of Samarqand leave the town and come to the Kan-i Gil to set up their tents and engage in trade. These city-dwellers were further ordered to set up a show of their skill to display to the horde camped in the field.[77] Other events this day included the public execution of the mayor of Samarqand, named "Dina," and another man named "Burodo Mirassa" (Burunday Mirza). Someone clearly informed Clavijo and his companions of the nature of the offenses for which "Dina" and "Burodo Mirassa" had been charged because these are presented at some length. Their public execution brought the political aspects of the *quriltāy* into full light, to both the Turco-Mongols and the Tajik residents of Samarqand—executions normally took place inside the citadel. Turco-Mongols and Tajiks alike were called to the Kan-i Gil to show fealty to Timur and to honor the members of his extended family. The many ambassadors from regions near and far also constituted an important audience and were privy to Timur's beneficence and judgment.

Clavijo's next dated entry details events from 13 October when Timur invited the embassy, yet again, to a feast. Approaching the pavilion in which they had visited Timur before, the ambassadors found it flanked by two newly assembled enclosures encircling tents.

[77] The trade show inspired Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 427–34, to compose a long poem about the various skills on display there. Although this is by far the best known event of its kind, other Timurid-era trade shows, for which the various guilds performed at festivals convened by rulers, have been listed by O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions," 253–4.

The tents and enclosures forming them were covered with textiles "more richly ornamented and more precious than any of the others that had been assembled before."[78] The walls of the enclosures were still higher and their entrances covered by a domed arch. These were covered in sumptuous textiles embroidered in gold. Crenellated towers rose over the doorways and the walls of the enclosure were punctuated with windows bound with cloth coverings (*con lazos hechos en el dicho paño*). One of the enclosure's walls was composed of an unadorned white cloth. Each enclosure contained tents but Clavijo was not given entry to them that day. When he returned the next day, a second great pavilion had been erected identical to Timur's first pavilion except that it was made from white silk and inside were colored and embroidered textiles.[79] The ambassadors were seated at a distance from this pavilion under an awning; other awnings were provided to each group of ambassadors which had come in from different far-flung regions. A circuit of wine jars had been placed all around Timur's pavilions and the tents. These marked a perimeter that no-one was allowed to trespass and were guarded by archers. This was yet another means of defining divisions between space, of making thresholds that marked transitions from one place to another amid a territory lacking permanent architectural elements. The soft architecture established these successive spaces and visually announced hierarchies among them—court protocol underscored these hierarchies by prescribing movements and codes of behavior just as they did in palace ensembles of hard architecture.

A feast followed where the guest of honor was Timur's grandson "Piyr Mahomad" (Pir Muhammad, 1376–1407). Clavijo provides many details of the entertainment provided at this feast—several pages are allotted to the elephants who performed tricks—and of the entrances of the "Great Khanim," Saray Mulk Khanim, with her many female attendants and eunuchs, and of Timur's second and third wives who joined the company from their individual enclosures. All in all, nine princesses of the royal house came in. The feast began only after they were all seated, beginning with the distribution of sweetened mare's milk, wine, the presentation of entertainment, and ending with the serving of food.

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[78] *…eran muy ricos e más preciados que ninguna de las otras que antes estavan armadas*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 284.

[79] *…e de un paño blanco de seda lo de fuera d'él; e lo de dentro eran paños de muchos colores, e lazos e travamentos que en él eran hechos*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 285.

The final days of the celebrations at Kan-i Gil included a feast with Timur on 16 October when the ambassadors joined Timur to drink in his tent and another feast on 17 October hosted by Saray Mulk Khanim. This gathering is again amply described. Her enclosure was set with multiple tents, the chief one a trellis tent covered in red textile with doors covered with material in such a way as to be transparent when viewed from inside and opaque from the outside.[80] The inner doors of this tent were appointed with figures of St. Peter and St. Paul holding books in their hands made from silver, booty taken by Timur when he raided the "Turks' treasury" (*el tesoro del turco*) in Bursa.[81] The familiar iconography of this Christian subject matter would have been easily identified by Clavijo.

Inside the tent there was also a "cabinet" (*armario*) made of gold and enamel and encrusted with precious stones and pearls. The cabinet was used as a stand for cups and contained six gold "flasks" (*redomas*) set with pearls and jewels and six "cups" (*taças*) similarly adorned. There was also a table of precious materials and standing next to it a "tree" (*un árbol*), the height of a man, also made of gold, its fruit composed of balas rubies, emeralds, turquoise, sapphires, and rubies and pearls (*balaxes e esmeraldas e turqueas e çafires e rubís e aljófar muy grueso*). Small birds of gold and enamel in many colors (*muchas paxarillas de oro, esmaltadas e fechas de muchas colores*) were perched among the branches. Similar trees, some of them mechanical contraptions, are mentioned in a range of sources from distant and recent historical contexts, making this tree a literary topos.[82]

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[80] *…e los que estudiesen de dentro pudiesen ver a los que de fuera estavan, e no pudiesen ver a ellos*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 298.

[81] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 298. The specific Turkic ruler in question is the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I whom Timur overthrew and captured in 1402.

[82] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 299. The same tree is possibly mentioned by Jean of Sultaniyya, "Mémoire sur Tamerlan," 451, where he mentions a "tree of very pure and fine gold" that Timur salvaged from the bottom of the Euphrates as one of the treasures of the Kings of Persia. Timur sent the tree to Samarqand along with other treasures. Similar trees fashioned from precious metals and studded with valuable stones are mentioned in earlier historical accounts. One is an account of Ibn al-Zubayr in his book on gifts and rarities when he enumerates details of the reception of two Byzantine ambassadors at the Abbasid court in Baghdad in 917. Aḥmad b. al-Rashīd Ibn al-Zubayr, *Book of Gifts and Rarities (Kitāb al-hadāyā wa al-tuḥaf)*, trans., Ghāda al-Ḥijjāwī al-Qaddūmī (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1996), 148–54, esp. 154. This tree with birds was an automaton and came up from the ground. Another source, the *Tā'rīkh Baghdād* (History of Baghdad) composed by Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Khāṭib al-Baghdādī (d. 1071), describes it as made of gold and silver with branches holding birds of different sizes which moved and sang in the

After visiting this tent and seeing its contents, the ambassadors were escorted back to the pavilion where they found Timur. One of its complex tented structures, though assembled from many pieces, "looked like a single thing" (*Así que de fuera parescía todo uno*).[83] Amid that enclosure there also stood a "wooden house" (*una casa de madera*) decorated with gold and blue that turned out to be the mosque where Timur performed his prayers. Even the mosque at the Kan-i Gil *quriltāy* could be disassembled for transport. Closing a series of experiences of soft architecture which frequently mimicked the morphological and decorative features of permanent architecture, the mosque brought the spectacle full circle: the most archetypal institution of hard architecture had been entirely re-done in a portable format.[84]

One final feast was held by Timur on 23 October at Kan-i Gil. It lasted the entire day. A week later, on 30 October, Timur left the Kan-i Gil for Samarqand where he visited the tomb complex built for his grandson "Mahomad Çoltan Miraza" (Muhammad Sultan, 1375–1403). Clavijo and the embassy joined Timur there for another feast. The ambassadors would only receive permission to leave the city on 21 November after several requests, beginning on 1 November.

Conclusion

Clavijo's narrative of his visits to the "orchards and houses" of Timur in Samarqand's vicinity and to the many tents and enclosures at the Kan-i Gil meadow for the *quriltāy* in 1404 offer some of the most

wind. See Guy Le Strange, "A Greek Embassy to Baghdad in 917 AD," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (February, 1897): 35–46, esp. 42. Another account related by the Franciscan Friar William of Rubruck (ca. 1210–ca. 1270) mentions a tree of silver made by the Parisian goldsmith Guillaume Boucher that he saw at Möngke Khan's court during his journey of 1253–1255; see İpşiroğlu, *Painting and Culture of the Mongols*, 36; and Leonardo Olschki, *Guillaume Boucher, a French Artist at the Court of the Khans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), 28–44. Note that Soucek, "Timurid Women," 206, has suggested that the possessions on display in Saray Mulk Khanim's tent may have been selected by her from the "baggage train" (*ağruq*) which she was entrusted to lead from Anatolia. According to Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 420, Saray Mulk Khanim quit the baggage train to hasten her arrival to Samarqand.

[83] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 300.

[84] This is equally a continuity from the Mongol Ilkhanid past when mosques, Buddhist temples, and churches were also made in portable form. See Donald N. Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran: The Il Khanid Period* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 7.

vivid descriptions of settings for Timurid courtly life and ceremony. His narrative confirms many details about a social order and political hierarchy that we know from other foreign sources as well as internal ones. It also details a typology of tented and cloth structures fully utilized by the Timurids—there were *khargāh* (trellis tent), *khayma* (tent stayed with ropes), *sāyabān* (pavilion or awning), and *sarāparda* (enclosure)—though only the last is identified by its Persian term in Clavijo's narrative. The means of assembly and composition are fastidiously described for each element of soft architecture. From Clavijo, we also learn something of the itinerary of movements of Timur and his royal entourage and how they observed protocols for court ritual, and thus practiced courtliness. Prescribed codes of behavior and etiquette ensured the decorous participation of all those involved during audience, gift-giving, drinking, and eating. Access to areas of the enclosures was carefully controlled as were seating arrangements and the sequences in which different social groups entered these spaces.

Many of these pieces of information have already been extracted from Clavijo's text and put to good use, often put up against other written sources, such as Yazdi's *Ẓafarnāma*, to pin down the scope and aspect of architecture in Timurid palace settings. Clavijo's text is presented here in such detail—perhaps even indulgently so—because the available English translations are often less than reliable and because scholars aware of such problems have used them all the same.

But there are other reasons for the extended presentation of Clavijo. Clavijo makes it clear that Timur engaged the prerogatives associated with his status as ruler in various contexts, principally the orchards and houses around Samarqand, the temporary enclosures of the Kan-i Gil, and the "palaces" or "palace" in Kish. By "orchards" he also surely meant "gardens" (Persian *bāgh*), a fact made clear in the Persian sources which offer more expanded discussion of the plantings—the noun *huerta* may even be a synonym for garden. These orchards were set with pavilions, tents, and a paraphernalia of awnings and textiles, thus transforming them from garden to royal court: Timur fully utilized the tent as an apparatus of kingship. Clavijo did not see the "palaces" in Kish when Timur was in residence, so his vision of that space lacked the full effect of sumptuous textile furnishings and furniture that he encountered so abundantly in the environs of Samarqand. Such transformation of a space is

alluded to by Yazdi when he notes of the Bagh-i Bihisht, "through the royal visit it became a garden of paradise."[85] The garden was transformed by Timur's presence—not only literally by his being *there*—because it had been made ready for him by a staff who set up its temporary elements: its walls, textile hangings, furniture, and sumptuous objects, and a menu of food and drink served by the many attendants who waited on the ruler and his entourage.

Some discussion has already been offered of the possible distinctions made in the choice of using the noun *palacio* or *casa* to name the architecture seen by the Spanish visitors. *Palacio* appears four other times in the narrative. Once it is used to refer to the "Chalbelecet" orchard, and a second time to what modern scholars identify as the madrasa-mausoleum built by Saray Mulk Khanim opposite Timur's Friday Mosque in Samarqand, though the use of the word in this instance is explicable by a conflation of the built form and what was actually happening here (Timur held several audiences and a feast in the building's courtyard which was also set with tents).[86] A third time Clavijo references a palace in the vicinity of Muhammad Sultan's mausoleum but supplies no information about it. A fourth time the noun *palacio* is used in the narrative is in a retrospective accounting of Samarqand as a whole and what Clavijo saw there: "and within these orchards which were outside the city were the greatest and most honored houses. And the king there had his palaces and honored houses as well as [did] the great men of the city and they also had their great estates and houses in these orchards."[87] It is almost as if Clavijo only understood that these had all been the ruler's "palaces" after the visit was done, his nomenclature largely shaped by Spanish notions of what constituted a palace (a building with a designated function and a space permanently given over to that function, mainly public discourse).

It is no wonder that an absolutely coherent nomenclature was impossible. Timur's audiences and feasts took place in changing,

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[85] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 89; Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 420.

[86] Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 309. Clavijo's use of the term has caused some confusion about this building. See Soucek, "Timurid Women," 209–10. O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions," 251, gets around the problem of nomenclature, suggesting that Clavijo described it as a "palace" because it was also used as a site for Timur's audiences and feasts, tents being set up in the courtyard of the building.

[87] *E entre estas huertas que de fuera de la ciudat son, están las más grandes e onradas casas. E el Señor allí tenía allí los sus palacios e casas honradas; otrosí los grandes omnes de la ciudat, las sus estancias e casas entre estas huertas las tenían*. Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 311.

shape-shifting environments which involved the fusion of sedentary and nomadic traditions of royal life—each one of those traditions was affected by the other. Timur's orchards ringing Samarqand combined fixed architectural components, most likely pavilions, set at their center, tents, and shade-giving awnings set up amid the orchard for temporary occupation. These were then disassembled and moved to the site that would next be occupied or re-outfitted day to day according to need. These extramural, out of doors environments were clearly fascinating to Clavijo and his companions. They had never seen their like and often expressed their failure to describe them, an arch trope current in many literary traditions. It is in this respect that we can shift from a reading of the text oriented toward the excavation of facts—the narrative as something claiming to be real, something that actually happened—toward a reading interested in how the narrative generates an experiential effect on its reader.

The focus of the Kan-i Gil *quriltāy* was a massive free-standing pavilion with numerous enclosures nearby for Timur and other members of the royal house to occupy and host events. Each one of these enclosures was composed of a *sarāparda*, gated and crenellated, with various kinds of tents and awnings inside. All around these royal elements there were other enclosures, for the countless members of the horde (Timur's entourage of military commanders and their Turco-Mongol cohort), and innumerable tents. These elements were laid out in such a way as to resemble urban settings, by forming regular streets. The Kan-i Gil was further imbued with the ambience of the city when all the traders and artisans quit Samarqand to set up their booths and perform shows at Timur's behest. Thus, a narrative of the city was transferred to Kan-i Gil and transplanted onto the evanescent, fugitive space of the military camp.

The artifice of the Kan-i Gil was not lost on Clavijo and his narrative descriptions convey its spectacular properties. He notes its many space-making components marking boundary and threshold, from cloth walls (with gateways and marked by high portals) to circuits of wine jugs. Much of what he witnessed simulated the morphology—squared compounds, walls, crenellations, portals, domes, towers—or decoration—windows covered with mesh or textiles made to appear as if they were a frieze of tiles—of hard architecture. Some of these temporary structures were so large that when seen from a distance one might think them castles. And yet, despite these kinds of formal relations, where soft architecture set itself up as something

it was not, it was a real thing.[88] When Clavijo first met Timur at the Bagh-i Dilgusha he was seated under "something like a portal" though it was made of cloth and wood. Though Clavijo understood that several of these pieces of soft architecture had been fabricated from discrete components, he notes how they were interlinked and how they appeared to be physically integrated. This was another dimension to the simulations at work in soft architecture. The perceptual ambiguity of soft architecture even called into question what he had perceived as hard architecture before in a way comparable to his likening a parasol to a miniature tent: there were moments when vision alone could not guarantee Clavijo, with absolute certainty, knowledge of the physical substance of what stood before him. Overall, the process of finding a language adequate to conveying what he saw and their exceptionally dense descriptions yielded a narrative that simultaneously performed the work of conveying what was there to the absent reader and the utter wonder of it.

In addition to all these complex dissimulations of permanent architecture, some tents were clearly just that and easily perceived as such, though they were adorned with sumptuous textile coverings to impress. Other tents were simply white and unadorned, signifying the high status of white felt used in Mongol tentage and for other customs. Here white silk seems to have replaced the white felt. The array of materials seen by Clavijo and his companions was daunting and challenging to describe, and yet other aspects of the process of court ceremonial made it still harder to comprehend. Timur's palaces were portable, cloaked with the paraphernalia of the Islamic palace, a sumptuous array of textiles, furniture and treasures acquired through booty, and their portability was thoroughly embraced.[89] When Clavijo returned to spaces he had visited before amid the *quriltāy*, he encountered changed or adapted environments. One can imagine that over the course of these many days of celebration, the experience of the whole was like a crescendo, the steady overwhelming of the senses by a panoply of impermanent materials coyly

[88] Noting the basic formal similarities between soft and hard architecture, Golombek, "Draped Universe," 30, writes that Timur's tents "simulated real architecture."

[89] Ibn ʿArabshāh, *ʿAjā'ib al-maqdūr*, 216, mentions other rare treasures set inside Timurid tents, including a "curtain," presumably a tapestry, Timur acquired as booty from Bayezid I.

aping permanent architecture while also working within the paradigms of Mongolian custom and its semiotics of the tent.

The use of tentage under Timur's rule was more than an anamnesis of the nomadic practice of seasonal migration: Clavijo's text makes that clear. Timur continued to live in tents and to use their visual language to project his image as Turco-Mongolian ruler, but these tents were cloaked with all the opulent trappings and furnishings of the Islamic palace and moreover simulated features of permanent architecture. In these last respects Timur's tentage was a clear departure from earlier Mongol practices of tentage in Mongolia, China, and Iran from the 1250s up to the early 1300s. Timurid practices of tentage were not a matter of identity crisis, of being caught somewhere between nomad and sedentary in an inexorable process toward complete cultural assimilation—as Monica Gronke has intimated—[90] or a "compromise between nomadic and urban life," the re-creation of a "nomadic environment in the microcosm of a city and its surroundings"—as Bernard O'Kane has described it.[91] Both characterizations have the unfortunate effect of depriving the Timurids of a measure of agency and consciousness over what they were doing, casting the shaping of Timur's courtly contexts in terms that are far too passive. Rather, Timur was consciously manipulating discrete cultural traditions for his own ends: artful fusions, hybrids, and juxtapositions of sedentary and nomadic practices were palpable to Clavijo and his company, who were duly impressed by them, even if they did not gauge and then name the relative balance of each in what they saw. Such manipulations of tradition ran across the gamut of patronage of art and architecture under Timur. His architectural commissions are especially revealing. He not only made careful choices about where and what to build, addressing the various confessional constituencies of the societies under his rule, but developed an iconography of the ruler through the inscriptional programs found on those monuments while also vying with the achievements of his immediate nomadic predecessors, the Mongol Ilkhans of Iran, a competition expressed principally through scale. Many of these developments became possible because of the new constellations of

[90] Gronke, "Persian Court Between Palace and Tent," 19, writes that Timur was neither "a full-fledged nomadic ruler because he did have a capital," nor a "wholly sedentarized ruler, because he did not really use his capital to live in. He was a sovereign in transition between nomadic and sedentary living."

[91] O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions," 253, 256.

regional building traditions practiced by the architects and craftsmen gathered by Timur in Samarqand.[92] The ideological savvy expressed in the formation of new courtly environments and architectural projects entirely matched Timur's capacity to remake and adapt political structures as he saw fit in expanding and controlling his realm.[93]

In this process of forming new courtly environments, artifice played a key role and it is an aspect of Clavijo's narrative about Timurid palaces that has been underplayed in readings of his *Embajada a Tamorlán*. In this respect then, Clavijo was not so different from Yazdi and the ways in which the latter wrote about the palaces of Timur, the various settings of courtly life and ceremony—they are both concerned with the affect of 'soft' architecture which each recorded in the conventions of his literary tradition.

In one passage from the *Ẓafarnāma*, after Toqtamish Khan narrowly escapes death at Timur's hands, Yazdi describes the construction of the camp at the Atal River and the Ur Töpä plain "for the royal descent, a majestic and awesome *sarāparda*" that "was set up encircling the plain, and inside it the dome of the victorious court was raised to the apex of the heavens."[94] What then follows is extensive praise of the site and its constituent elements, and mention of the cast of characters assembled there to perform courtly celebrations over twenty-six days. The *sarāparda* was made of "gold-spun brocade" and the tents and pavilions were so "innumerable" that "the carpet of the earth [was] lost amidst the camp."[95] When Timur orders a feast to take place, he is styled as "the happy nature of the Chosroes to whom the celestial sphere is slave" while the camp is compared to a paradise on earth.[96] Yazdi freely mixes passages of prose with expanded sections of poetry that amplify or extend the subject matter of his prose. In some prose passages, Yazdi demonstrates his skill in stringing subjects and their modifiers into seemingly infinite sentences that are no less impressive than the poetry in manifesting dexterity in working with literary vocabulary, images, and structure.

Elsewhere, Yazdi writes about the events at Kan-i Gil, noting that the site was "raised to the level of paradise by the royal encamp-

[92] See Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan*.
[93] The key study remains that by Manz, *Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*.
[94] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 83. Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 393.
[95] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 83. Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 393.
[96] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 84. Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 395.

ment" as a transformative process was set in motion: "forage herbs became tulips, stones became rubies and pearls; grass became elixir, and the ground became gold."[97] At the center of it all there were four *sarāpardas* for the royal residence and a massive trellis tent. He describes the tent as "A sphere raised by artifice/ casting a shadow enveloping world upon world."[98] Throughout this extended passage about preparations at Kan-i Gil, Yazdi uses a number of metaphors from Islamic culture and its rich literary traditions to praise the edifice and its patron and inspire wonder in the reader through the sheer impressiveness of what was made. The tent and enclosure were awe-inspiring because of their size, scope, and materiality: unlike Clavijo, Yazdi does not dwell on their manufacture as a strategy of conveying the affective power of the 'soft' architecture. And yet, it would be incorrect to think that Yazdi was uninterested in the artifice of the site. He wrote a poem about the tentmaker in his expansive poetic eulogy of Timur's Samarqand trade show at Kan-i Gil:

> What can I say of the tentmaker?
> That subtle one made a moving camel.
> From sticks, reeds, rope and canvas he artfully
> made the structure of a camel.
> Then he secreted himself inside to display his
> craft to the people of the world.
> When the veil is drawn aside, see how the
> maker is hidden within his own handiwork.
> In just this way is the entire world, so
> gaze upon it with the eye of insight.[99]

The poem also includes praise of the gem sellers, goldsmiths, drapers, entertainers, fruit sellers, furriers, butchers, leather workers, acrobats, and the cotton-sellers who constructed a bird from cotton and a minaret from "fluffed cotton and reeds."[100] In every instance, Yazdi's poetry focuses on the extraordinary capacities of the traders and craftsmen and sometimes on their exceptional skill in artifice, to make something that appears to be other than it is. Yazdi's appreciation of the tentmaker's skill, expressed through artful metaphor, was clearly shared by Clavijo. Clavijo's frequent similes, expression

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[97] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 91. Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 424.

[98] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 92. Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 424 (*sipihrī bi-sanʿat bar āfrākhta/ jahān dar jahān sāya āndākhta*).

[99] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 94.

[100] Thackston, *Century of Princes*, 94. Yazdi, *Ẓafarnāma*, 2: 431.

of uncertainty, and statements of inability to express in words what he saw are equally features present in Yazdi's writing, though Clavijo resorted to different techniques in framing the artifice of Timur's courtly environments. Clavijo's narrative used the rhetoric of the real to convey the spectacle of Timur's courtly life and ceremony at what would be the ruler's last hurrah.

CHAPTER FOUR

COPYING MAPS BY MATTHEW PARIS: ITINERARIES FIT FOR A KING

Daniel K. Connolly

Maps are perhaps the most obvious form in which a culture's various geographies are given shape and meaning; they make a record of those geographies and in their own right are quite compelling products of social, religious and political constructions. Maps become fundamental to a culture's self-identity; at the same time, because they are contingent, the geographies they attempt to fix are really quite fluid. Maps then are neither as stable nor as dependable as our modern, technologically driven forms of mapping would have us believe, but are instead constantly shifting and changing, depending not only on who is describing the geography, but who is looking at it and why.[1] The scrutiny of any given map becomes a performance of the geographic principles and tenets that lie beneath it and undergird its production, revealing both the agendas and the biases of its culture. For our more familiar, modern map-making, those agendas and biases are bound up with the modes of their production and with modernity's over-riding investment in an objectively accurate rendering of coastline and contour, of elevation and deviation. Yet these are measured by technologies that we too readily accept as a substitute for science. *How* we can know about something constrains *what* we can know about it, and the 'science' that lies at the root of knowing is driven less by the questions we want to ask, and more by the answers at which we are likely to arrive. In other words, the technology that produces a map conditions the kinds of questions we ask both of the geography itself, and, in the case of historical studies, the maps that describe it.

[1] For a fascinating treatment of these issues of technology and identity in maps across time, see James Akerman and Robert Karrow, eds., *Maps: Finding our Place in the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

J.B. Harley has noted the central hurdle to the study of maps from all periods:

> Far from holding up a simple mirror of nature that is true or false, maps redescribe the world—like any other document—in terms of relations of power and of cultural practices, preferences, and priorities. What we read on a map is as much related to an invisible social world and to ideology as it is to phenomena seen and measured in the landscape. Maps always show more than an unmediated sum of a set of techniques.[2]

In short, if we wish to access that invisible social world and its ideologies, we must be willing to divorce from medieval maps (or any maps, for that matter) the ideas and goals of an objective and absolute science, no matter how thoroughly those goals or strategies lay enmeshed in the maps' production, and we should do so in order to get at the deeper causes and meanings that lay behind details of measurement and contour.

The study of medieval geography, as revealed in maps, is indeed a particularly apt vehicle for getting at the invisible social and ideological forces that produced the Western European sense of a self-defining geography. It is especially apt because medieval cartography, while it manipulated measurements of time and space, did not, at least before the portolan charts of the later thirteenth century (and often not even then), consciously strive for an empirically verifiable accuracy.[3] As we will see, theological truths took control of the way the world was represented in medieval English cartography. Further, the construction of identity through the tools of geographic description occurred not only in terms of where and how a culture situated itself on the orb, but also in terms of the kinds of history that were recorded on a map, and, for medieval authors at least, what sort of future these geographies delineated. Placeness and history coordinate in the pliability or malleability of medieval maps and, from this,

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[2] J.B. Harley, "Texts and Contexts in the Interpretation of Early Maps," in *The New Nature of Maps*, ed., Paul Laxton (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2001), 35–6. The materials and interpretations presented here receive fuller exposition in chapters 4 and 6 of my book, *The Maps of Matthew Paris: medieval journeys through space, time and liturgy*, forthcoming from Boydell and Brewer.

[3] See the excellent and thorough survey of the history of medieval cartography, David Woodward, "Medieval *Mappaemundi*," in *The History of Cartography*, I, eds., J.B. Harley and David Woodward, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 286–370.

generate new understandings of cultural identity and its possibilities.

Medieval maps are only just beginning to be explored for the ways they expressed and gave shape to the agendas of their patrons and makers (rather than the ways they fit within the history of technology).[4] In this essay, we will be looking at two medieval itinerary maps, which are, on the surface, rather similar in appearance. Nonetheless, our careful scrutiny of them will reveal their different audiences, as well as the religious and political agendas that were furthered both by their geographic descriptions and by the ways they each recorded the histories of their capital cities.

Around 1250 or so, Matthew Paris, the famous chronicler, artist, and monk at the Benedictine abbey of St. Albans in England, made a set of itinerary maps that preface his main historical work, the *Chronica Majora* (Fig. 4.1, Major Chronicle, fol. 1r). The *Chronica* is a universalizing history of the world, telling the story of Christendom in the six ages of man, from creation until 1259, the year of Matthew Paris' death. This work is now in the Parker Library at Cambridge (Corpus Christi College, Ms. 26); hereafter I refer to this itinerary as the 'Monastic' version. There exists another version of these itinerary maps, which prefaces Paris' *Historia Anglorum*, or History of England, held in the British Library (B.L. Royal Ms. 14 C vii, c. 1250–59). These maps have traditionally been dated to between 1250 and 1259, but as we shall see, that attribution is questionable. For reasons that will become clear, I will call this set of itinerary maps the 'Royal' version. The texts of both histories are written in Latin, while the itineraries are in Anglo-Norman. The *Historia Anglorum* is an abridgement of Paris' universal chronicle, but treats only materials relevant to the History of England. The *Historia Anglorum* was probably begun around 1250 and was probably intended as a presentation copy for the King of England, as well as for other important and noble visitors to the abbey.

[4] See, among other studies, Daniel Birkholz, *The King's Two Maps: Cartography and Culture in Thirteenth-Century England* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Catherine Delano-Smith and Roger J.P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1999); Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed their World* (London: The British Library, 2000); Naomi R. Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001); Marcia Kupfer, "Medieval world maps: embedded images, interpretive frames," *Word and Image* 10 (1994): 262–88; Scott Westrem, *The Hereford Map* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).

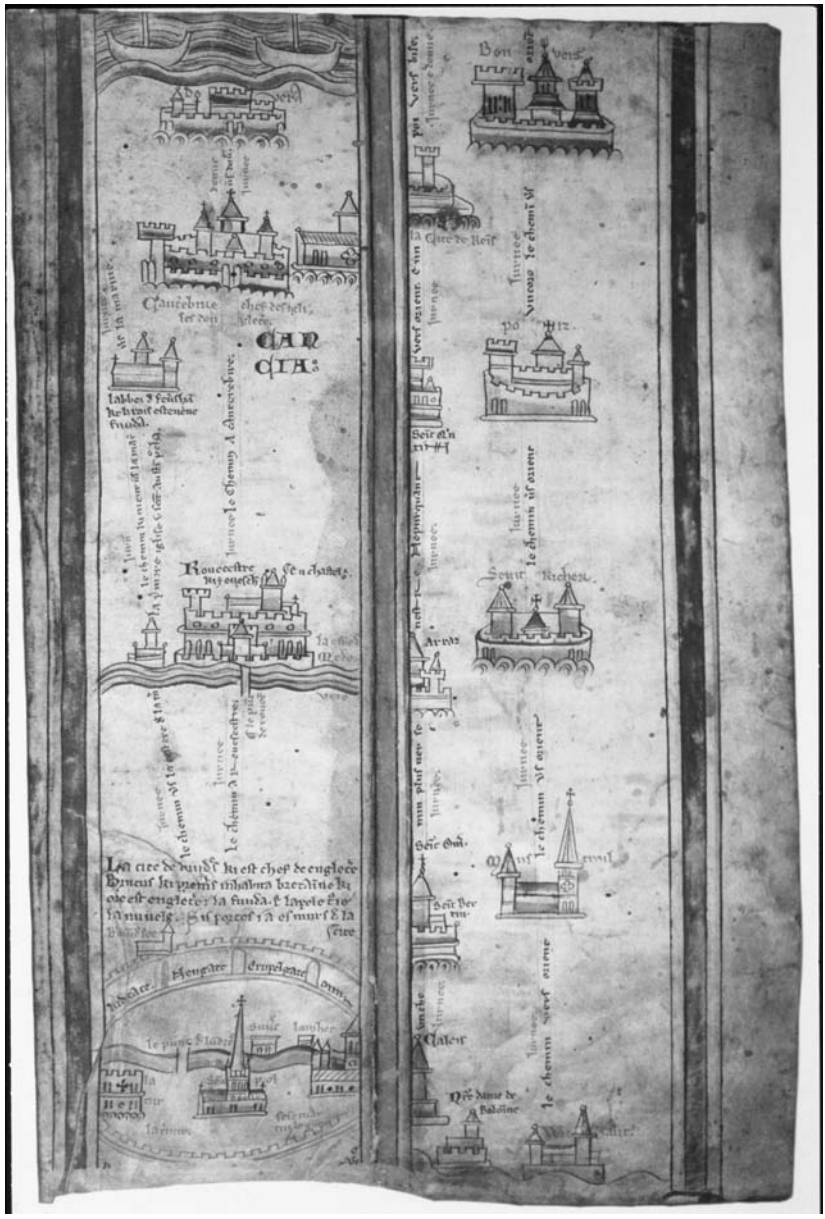

Fig. 4.1. The "Monastic" Itinerary Map: London to Bouveis. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Ms. 26, fol. 1r. By permission of the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

All of the scholars who have commented upon Matthew Paris' maps have assumed that all of the different versions of the itineraries were made by him.[5] However, I think the last version, the Royal itinerary (Fig. 4.2), was probably made by someone else.[6] This Royal itinerary is a more complete and 'fair' copy of the earlier and somewhat incomplete Monastic itinerary (the one prefacing his universal chronicle). I will argue that the Royal itinerary was made sometime after Matthew died, possibly as late as the 1290s, when King Edward I (r. 1272–1307) had asserted his sovereignty over Scotland and had instituted a search of all the official and monastic records that could support his claim to rule Scotland and therefore to adjudicate a successor to Alexander III. This Royal version has, on the back of its final folio, one of four famous maps of England; these are the earliest known maps of England. The Royal version's map of England

[5] Richard Gough, *British Topography*, (London: Payne and Son, 1780), 59–86; Konrad Miller, *Mappaemundi: Die ältesten Weltkarten*, 7 vols., (Stuttgart: Jos. Rothsche, 1895), vol. 3, 68–94, esp. pp. 83ff. C. Raymond Beazley, *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. II: *A History of Exploration and Geographical Science from the Close of the Ninth to the Middle of the Thirteenth Century (c. AD 900–1260)*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1901, reprint New York: Peter Smith, 1949), 585ff. These early scholars were mostly concerned for attribution and dealt only briefly with the itineraries. Others of the period discussed the whole of the maps as a kind of pilgrimage guide, without elaborating further: Frederic Madden, *Catalogue of the manuscript maps, charts, and plans, and of the topographical drawings in the British Museum*, (London: British Museum, Dept. of Manuscripts, 1861), 14; and H. Michelent and G. Raynaud, *Itinéraires à Jérusalem, rédigés en français aux XIeme, XIIeme et XIIIeme siècles*, Société de L'Orient Latin, série géographique, vol. 3, (Genéve: Jules-Guillaume Fick, 1882), xxiii. The fundamental studies of Matthew Paris's *oeuvre*, to which my work is deeply indebted and without which it could not have progressed, were done by Richard Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958); and Suzanne Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris in the "Chronica Majora"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). More recently, see Michael Gaudio, "Matthew Paris and the Cartography of the Margins," *Gesta* 39 (2000): 50–7.

[6] There are, in fact, two more thirteenth-century versions: British Library Cotton Ms. Nero D v, fols. 183v and 184r (c. 1250), is a brief sketch version and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Ms. 16, fols. 2r and 2v (c. 1250; hereafter, CCCC) is an earlier, incomplete and much damaged version. There are also two later copies of the map. British Library Cotton Ms. Tiberius E vi, fols. 2–4, is a severely burnt manuscript, a cartulary from the late fourteenth century that holds a fairly faithful copy of the Monastic version of the itineraries. As well, sometime in the sixteenth century, William Camden made a copy of the 'Royal' version (British Library, Lansdowne Ms. 253, fols. 228 ff). Notes on the flyleaf of the *Historia Anglorum* (British Library, Royal Ms. 14 C vii, fol. 1, c. 1250–1259), indicate that the book (and likely therefore the Royal version of the itinerary) traded various owners until it ended up in the Royal Library of James I. In 1757, the Royal Library became part of the British Library. See Vaughan, *Matthew Paris,* 240–2 and Lewis, *Art of Matthew Paris,* 457.

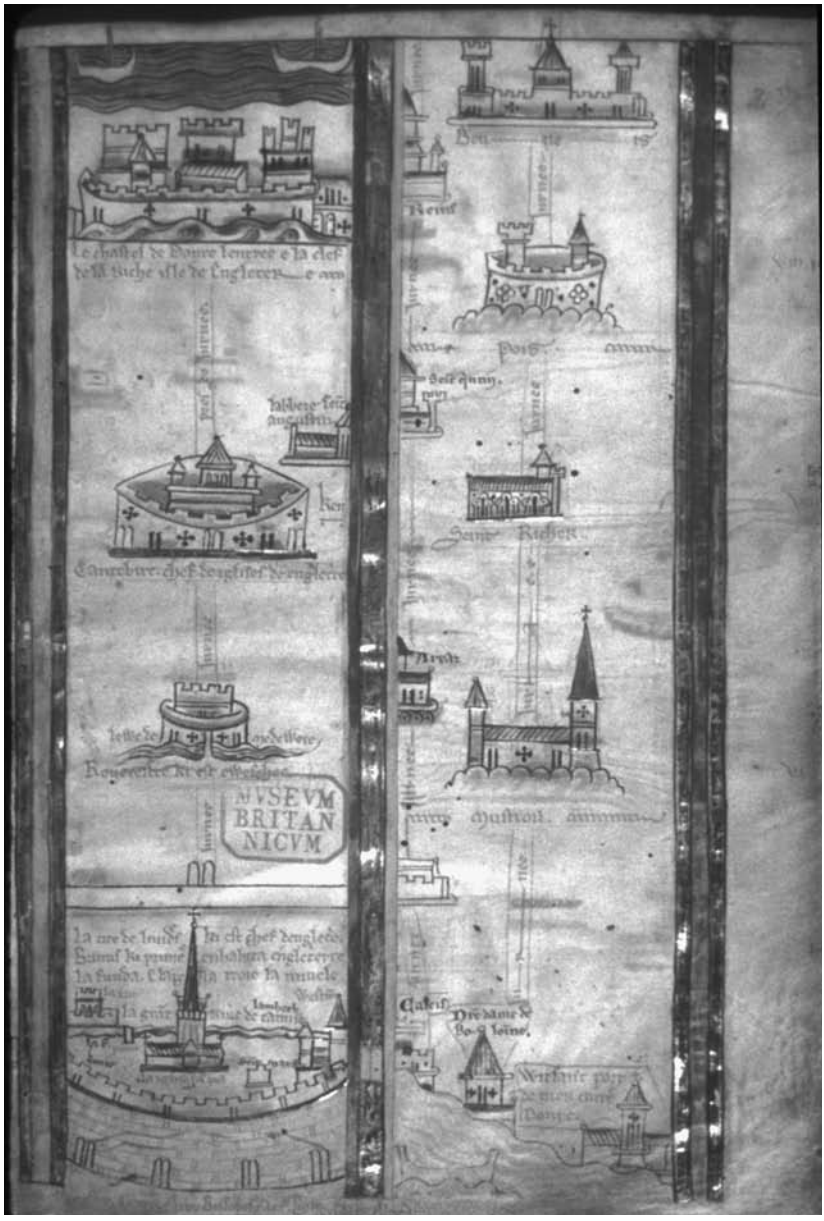

Fig. 4.2. The "Royal" Itinerary Map: London to Bouveis. British Library, Ms. Royal 14 C vii, fol. 2r. By permission of the British Library.

also has traditionally been ascribed to Matthew Paris, but as we will see, the hurried addition of this map specifically locates its creation as a response to Edward I's call for supporting evidence for his royal claims and allows us to speculate further on the reason for the production of the itinerary itself.

Those scholars who have examined closely the pages of these itinerary maps, Richard Vaughan and Suzanne Lewis for example, have viewed them as 'illustrations' of the places mentioned in Matthew's huge *Chronica*, much as one of our modern history textbooks might provide illustrative maps.[7] That is, they have supposed these pages functioned as a sort of reference tool, allowing the user to locate places in the world that are mentioned in the chronicle. To some extent, that might have been how some medieval maps functioned. The Hereford Mappamundi, c. 1300 (Fig. 4.3), for example, seems to do just that—to act as a sort of visual, topographical encyclopedia of the world, its peoples and events. The Hereford Mappamundi is a large display map, probably inserted as the central panel of a triptych and mounted somewhere on one of the walls within Hereford Cathedral (in western England).[8] In the lower left-hand corner of the map, its author used the term *estoire* to describe what his audience had before them:

> Let all who have this history (*estoire*),
> Or shall hear or read or see it,
> Pray to Jesus in His Divinity,
> To have pity on Richard of Haldingham and Lafford,
> Who has made and planned it,
> To whom joy in heaven be granted.[9]

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[7] Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 235–50; and Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 322. Recent contributions depart from this approach: Daniel K. Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage in the Itinerary Maps of Matthew Paris" *Art Bulletin* 81.4 (1999): 598–622 and Gaudio, "Matthew Paris and the Cartography of the Margins." Gaudio unfortunately was not able to incorporate my conclusions in to his study.

[8] The exact location of the map within the cathedral is not known, see: Klein, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, pp. 76–83; Kupfer, "Medieval world maps," and Dan Terkla, "The Original Placement of the Hereford *Mappa Mundi*," *Imago mundi* 56.2 (2004), 131–51. Terkla postulates an earlier date for the map (1287) and that it was part of the shrine of St. Thomas of Cantalupe in the cathedral's north transept.

[9] Woodward, "Medieval *Mappaemundi*," *The History of Cartography*, I: 309, "Tuz ki cest estoire ont / Ou oyront ou lirrount ou veront / Prient a ihesu en deyte / De Richard de Haldingham e de Lafford eyt pite / Ki lat fet e compasse / ki ioie en cel li seit done."

Fig. 4.3. The Hereford *Mappamundi*, after: Naomi Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: the Hereford Paradigm* (Woodbridge, England: Boydell, 2001), frontispiece.

The Hereford Mappamundi calls itself an 'estoire' or history, and notes a series of layers for its appreciation—hearing, reading, seeing. History and its encounter in a medieval map then is thematized as the primary mode through which to access and understand this culture's sense of its geography. At the same time, the map also lays out the locations of the various peoples and important historical events of the world. Yet, unlike the multiple and serial pages of the itinerary maps, the Hereford map presents all of this information at once. Centered upon Jerusalem and drawn on a single piece of vellum, it asks its viewer to construct his or her own journeys through its twisting and turning spaces.

In Paris' itinerary maps, something different seems to be going on; there is more of a direct engagement with the body of its user. The maps pointedly emphasize a strict linear progression through the spaces of the Latin West; they rely upon the turning of their pages (and added flaps) to progress through those spaces and they ask their readers to read out their movements and directions through the mapped spaces. Manipulating the flaps, reading aloud, turning the pages, engaged the body of the reader and created for their users, whether king or monk, the experience of virtual travel through their spaces.[10]

On their surface, the two itineraries, Monastic and Royal, appear quite similar, almost identical, but what differences they have, in fact, point to the radically different intents and purposes to which maps could aspire in the medieval period. The differences between these sets of itineraries brings into greater relief the multi-valences of medieval geography and its very malleability. I hope to highlight, then, the different ideologies (clerical vs. royal) that lay behind the different uses of geography.

The design of these itinerary maps is unique in the history of medieval cartography. No other medieval map shows the spaces of the Latin West as a series of cities linked to each other, extracted out of the landscape of Christendom, and emphatically leading to its center at Jerusalem. Both itineraries prefaced histories or chronicles, one history more complete and universal, to be sure, the other more chauvinistic and limited to England in scope. Both maps display an emphatic linearity, leading their user through Europe to Jerusalem at their end, and both have added flaps that allow the user

[10] Daniel K. Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage," passim.

to change the geographies and the stories presented about their places.

The first and fifth pages of the Monastic itinerary (Figs. 4.1 and 4.4) show the dynamic and performative possibilities of the maps in the flaps that Matthew added to the top and side of Southern Italy. These flaps extend the spaces of the codex—one depicts Rome and tells its story of city founding, the other represents the island of Sicily. Since Matthew had made earlier versions, we know that he planned these flaps into the design of the itinerary as a way to add to the interactive quality of these spaces. Turning the pages and turning the flaps help perform the journey through the mapped spaces. They change the route and change the meanings the monks of St. Albans could derive from these places; these actions give the monk his choice of which routes to follow or perhaps the option simply to play with the maps' ideas and spaces.[11] The flaps attached to the Royal version are not as complete as those attached to the Monastic one and do not seem then to offer the same possibilities. The rest of the maps are more straightforward. They both show a route from London, across the channel, through France and Italy to Rome, and then on to the heel of Italy's boot at Brindisi where a boat launches across the Mediterranean to arrive in the Holy Land and eventually lead the user to Jerusalem.

Travel, of course, was a means of knowing the world. But the problem with the itineraries is that Matthew Paris was a Benedictine monk who had taken a vow of stability, and hence was generally not allowed to travel (except for one trip to Norway).[12] Thus the itinerary

[11] "Play," or the creation of different connections and associations of ideas (usually spiritual ones) was a key ingredient in the monastic training of meditation and reflection. See Karl F. Morrison, "The Exercise of Thoughtful Minds: The Apocalypse in Some German Historical Writings," in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, eds., Richard Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 253. Morrison discusses how medieval authors presupposed this kind of interpretative game, in which multiple meanings were made available beyond those intended by the author, who, nonetheless, intended the game. That is, such authors set up the field to allow and encourage these possibilities, even if not all were specifically envisioned. The play of the game demanded an exercise of visual as well as verbal imagination. When the subject was historical writings, history became a spectacle; the text, a script with inexplicit stage direction; the reading, a performance before the mind's eye, but one that happened between and across these different possibilities. See also Karl F. Morrison, *History as Visual Art in the 12th Century Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[12] On the biography of Matthew Paris, see Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 1–20.

TRAPES.
LA TERRE DE SECILE
ROMA
APVLIA
IVRE
Capue.
Fiorence.
Pise.
Ancone.
Bolomne la gre.
Ymole.
Arezo.
Pierole.
Sutrie.
Viterbe.
Orchiete.
Aquapendent.
Orbiete.
Sutrie.
Nepe.
Ancone.
Arezo.
Pierole.
Viterbe.
Orchiete.
Aquapendent

maps (at least the Monastic version) were made by a man who did not take the journey, for a group of men who would themselves not take the journey.[13] Made up of seven pages, Paris' itinerary map is filled with pictures and texts that excite both visual and, as we will see, aural senses. By creating multi-sensorial experiences of these pages, Matthew essentially created an experience of virtual travel for his fellow brethren. The pages thereby helped to create the devotional experience of an imagined or spiritual pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[14]

The route is defined by texts (written in Anglo-Norman) that tell the reader how many days it would take to get to the next town. For example, just outside of London, the text reads: "Jurnee—Le Chemin a Rouestre (one day—the road to Rochester)." Sometimes (Fig. 4.5), Matthew stretched out the word "~jou~~r~r~r~~nn~ee~" as a way to combine the reader's own voice with his movements up the page.

Matthew designed the map pages themselves as a way to keep the viewer's body engaged in the journey. The journey depends on involving the reader's body as a way to strengthen the credibility of the virtual experience. The routes always begin at the lower edge of the book, next to the reader's body, and move up the page; the route then continues again in the lower right of the page and progresses again up the page, like a capital 'N.' At the top right of the page, at a passage's end, there is some natural feature, a river or a mountain range, and the turning of the page crosses that space. The manuscript thus works with the body of its user to incorporate or marry its spaces with the reader's imagination, and so together they create the experience of virtual travel.

The most vivid example of this marriage of the body with the mechanics of the book happens at the turning of the page from lower Sicily to the last page showing the Holy Land. At the top left of page six (Fig. 4.4), the route appears to come to an abrupt end, but if we

[13] One of the 'rules' of the Benedictine order was to live and worship within the confines of the cloister. Monks were allowed to travel to conduct business—and we know that Matthew Paris, in fact, once made a trip to Norway—but, for the most part, the cloister was a model of confinement and stability in which the monk was to develop an inner life oriented towards God. Paradoxically, this inner life also might involve engaging in imagined journeys that took one beyond the walls of the abbey to other sacred places and times.

[14] Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage," passim.

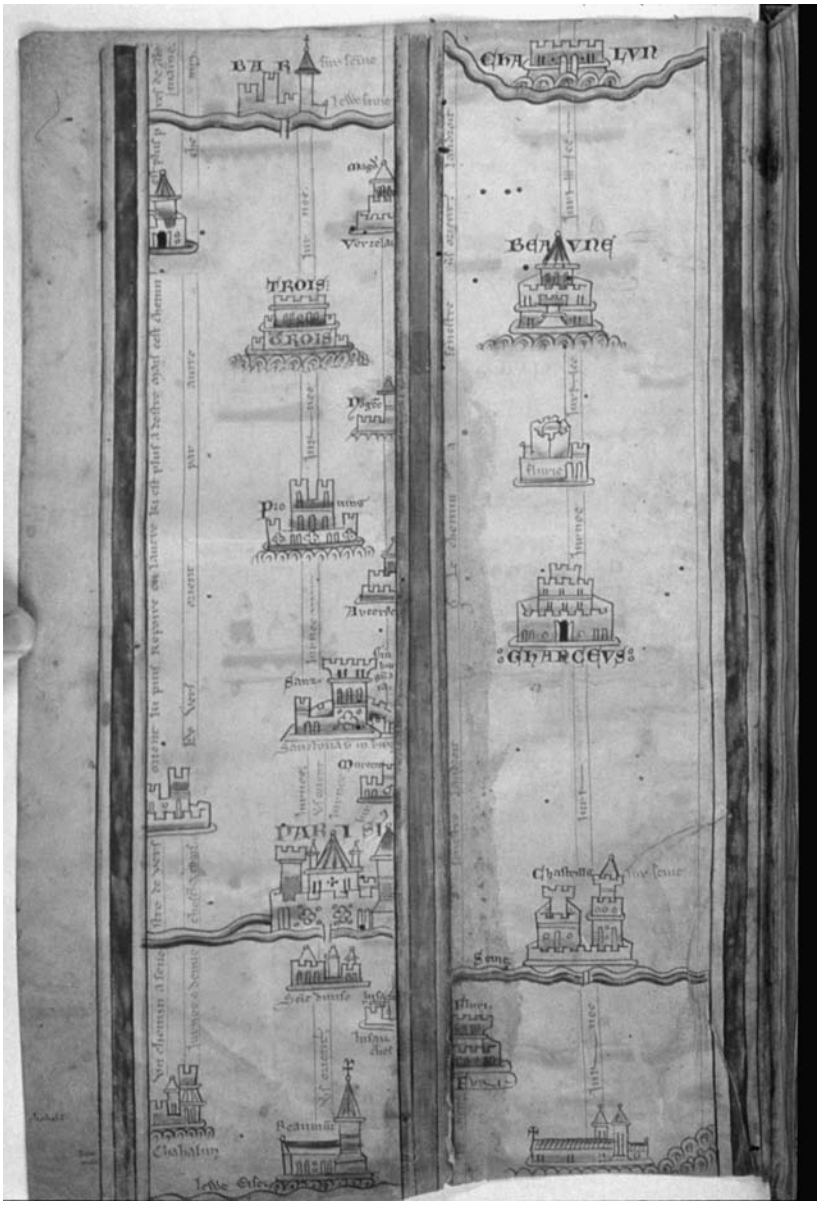

Fig. 4.5. The "Monastic" Itinerary Map: Beaumont to Chalun. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Ms. 26, fol. 1v. By permission of the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

look closer, we espy a small boat in the upper left that seems to launch off from the page, and when we turn the page (Fig. 4.6), we also simultaneously cross the Mediterranean to arrive at the great crusader stronghold, Acre, in the harbor of which a monk steers a boat and looks out at the viewer, as if to confirm the viewer's arrival in the Holy Land.[15]

From Acre, there is a short path that leads up to the idealized square of a Heavenly Jerusalem. The depiction of the Holy City in its ideal geometry signals its description in the Book of Revelations and in Ezekiel. Matthew here depicted a future, heavenly city as the goal of his brethren's meditative experience because so much of monastic devotional exercises centered on the ideal and heavenly, rather than the worldly and historic. Although I have been concentrating on the Monastic itinerary, both versions use similar mechanics to incorporate the body of their user and so help to create the experience of travel or pilgrimage to its goal of Jerusalem.[16]

It is, however, in the recounting of history that the biggest differences between the Monastic and Royal versions may be discerned. Those differences again point to the highly manipulable and fluid nature of medieval geography and its ideological aspirations. Those aspirations trade on the different ways that the maps tell the foundational histories of nations, specifically in the key world capitals, London, Rome, and Jerusalem. The tellings of those histories differ in the ways each version choreographs imperial concerns within a universal history, and mark then the greatest change from the Monastic version to the Royal one.

The Monastic Version

In order to understand the significance of the changes that occur in the telling of these histories, we should look closely at the earlier, Monastic version. Its itinerary pages preface the *Chronica Majora*, and together with that history, were specifically designed for a monastic audience. Its constructions of geography, then, turn upon a monastic, essentially theological, understanding of the history of the world.

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[15] Closer scrutiny of the map reveals other, similar signs that directed the reader to this point of embarkation; see Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage."

[16] For a more thorough discussion of the incorporation of the reader/viewer's body in the mechanics of the manuscript, see Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage."

Fig. 4.6. The "Monastic" Itinerary Map: The Holy Land, with flaps open. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Ms. 26, fols. 3v and 4r. By permission of the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

In addition to the promotion that history writing provided for an abbey's success, the recording of historical events also played a theological role; it let Matthew and his fellow monks see the course of God's divine plan as it had unfolded to that date and, perhaps then, where it was headed.[17] The Monastic version of the itinerary seems to work as a way to coordinate the geography of the world with this course of history or divine plan. At one level, the Monastic version allowed its monastic audience to retrace the movements of Christian history, which are deposited as the myths of the founding of three world capitals. These three myths of city founding form a kind of genealogy of empire, according to the medieval ideas of *translatio imperii* (transference of empire), a common *topos* in classical traditions of empire and its histories, which here unites the places of the Latin West in a continuous narrative to be retrieved and recuperated in the maps.[18] At another level, this retracing of Christian history allowed the monk to recover, in a performative dynamic, the map's summations of history as the divine plan. This performance was one more way to access and contemplate the approaching End of the World—the apocalypse.

The maps were made sometime around 1250, a year when Paris thought the world would come to an end. Paris deposited some apocalyptic symbolism into his representation of Jerusalem, and the end point of the performance of the map leads to that apocalyptic end in the Holy City. Although a New Age had not yet begun, Paris nonetheless continued to believe in an immanent apocalypse, following the then popular prophecies that predicted 1260 as the year of the end of the world.[19]

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[17] See, generally, M.D. Chenu, "Theology and the New Awareness of History," in *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, ed. and trans., Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 162–201.

[18] Chenu, "Theology and the New Awareness of History," 185–6. On the genealogies of civitas and of empire and its histories, see the insightful article by Francis Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae," *Speculum* 69 (1994): 665–704, esp. 670ff.

[19] Near the beginning of the *Chronica majora* (fol. 15v), Paris added these verses concerning the nativity of Christ in the lower margins of the folio, "When twice six hundred years and fifty more / Are gone since blessed Mary's son was born / Then, Antichrist shall come full of the devil." Matthew's verses, in fact, are an adaptation of Joachim of Fiore's well known writings, which were then circulating in religious manuscripts throughout England. See Suzanne Lewis, "Exegesis and Illustration in

We will come back to the end of the world in a bit, but now I want to return to the beginning of things. The Monastic itinerary tells the foundational stories of three world capitals that comprise textual staging posts for the journey, beginning in London, through Europe to Rome, and then finally to Jerusalem at its end. It is in these three cities, London, Rome and Jerusalem, that one version (a specifically English version) of *translatio imperii* is charted out. The medieval theory of *translatio imperii* held universal history together as a seamless whole based on a theory of imperial inheritance that interpreted empire's descent or movement across the *oikumene* (the known, inhabited world) as so many ordained successions of kingship or empire. Based loosely upon the Old Testament Book of Daniel, only one kingdom or empire was thought to exert hegemony at a time (this within a fairly circumscribed set of kingdoms); political legitimacy, as well as the cultural supremacy that accrued to empire, were thought to have passed down from ancient Greece and Rome to 'modern-day' (that is, medieval) Europe. At the time of Matthew's writing, various kingdoms of Europe were all asserting the heritages, both political and cultural, which entitled them to be inheritors of that empire, and thus culminations of the very workings of history. For even as the kings of England and France might have recognized the status that traditionally belonged to the Holy Roman Emperor, they contested that status when they asserted (through state rituals, myth-making, and other forms of cultural and political production) their own contemporary monarchies as the culmination of the movement of history across the world, from the realm of the ancient Trojans to their own present day empires. *Translatio imperii*, then, becomes a critical narrative agent that, as we shall see, holds the itinerary's three stories of city founding together as a story of civilization's migration across the *oikumene*.

Finally, Matthew's version of this genealogy, I think, attempted to resolve conflicts that were inherent in the thirteenth century historiographic enterprise, conflicts that arose between two strategies for telling history, one that was traditional and monastic (and which relied upon an Augustinian-Orosian paradigm that used a set of key scriptural events to define the course of Christian history), and the

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Thirteenth Century English Apocalypses," in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn, eds. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 259–76.

other, which redeployed the classical, Virgilian understanding of the origins of empire and its 'translation' across the kingdoms of Europe, beginning in the east and ending in the west. This latter strategy answered the perennial question for medieval literary culture of how to understand the place of pagan myth within a Christian universal history.[20]

The monastic reader, at the very beginning of his eastward movements, encountered and read a myth about Brutus and his founding of London (Fig. 4.1, lower left). Brutus, who had traveled from Italy to duplicate Rome's empire in Britain, thus begins the journey for Paris' readers:

> The city of London which is the capital of England. Brutus, who was the first inhabitant of Britain, now England, founded it and called it the New Troy. There are seven gates in its walls.[21]

This inscription imparts to London, "chef de engleterre," the glory of a mystified, ancestral city founding, by borrowing from and extending the story of Virgil's *Aeneid*.[22] The story of Brutus had most recently been retailored for the Plantagenet dynasty in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*.[23] Monmouth, chronicler and Bishop of St. Asaph, wrote his history sometime between 1135 and 1139 and was responsible for the introduction of the Arthurian legend into English historiography. In addition, he expanded upon tradition by more specifically linking the English crown to the descendants of Virgil's Aeneas.[24] Brutus is the grandson of Aeneas who is driven from Italy and, with his Trojan comrades, sails to the island of Albion, which he conquers, makes his homeland, and renames "Britain." Brutus fled Rome to found London; and so as the reader/viewer (or rather the performer) of this map moves from London through Europe to Rome, he retraces these movements of empire,

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[20] On the tensions between an Augustinian and Virgilian sense of history, see Ingledew, "The Book of Troy," passim.

[21] "La cite de lundres ki est chef de engleterre. Brutus ki premere inhabita bretainne ki ore est engleterre: la funda e lapele troie la nuvele: Sis portes I a es murs et la seite," CCCC, Ms. 26, fol. 1r.

[22] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550–1307* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974), 11.

[23] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (New York: Penguin Books, 1978): 53–74.

[24] Ingledew, "The Book of Troy" passim.

from Brutus of London to, as we shall see, Romulus and Remus of Rome.

Stories of two kinds of empire occupy the flap depicting Rome, which Paris added to the page depicting Southern Italy (Fig. 4.4, on the right). Here we encounter our first resolution of scriptural history with classical history. It is a fairly lengthy passage, which need only be summarized. There are three distinct parts to the text. The first establishes empire as the theme to be associated with Rome. The city is described as the capital of Christendom, and once the capital of the entire world. Its status as the head of Christianity lay in the redemption of its pagan and miscreant past.[25] The second portion of this passage deals with some of those past pagan practices of the city.[26]

The remainder of the passage, the third part, treats the creation and transfer of a new kind of empire, a Christian empire, effectively blending a Virgilian sense of history with a Christian one:

> Then God caused to be in that place the pope, who is the sovereign priest of the Holy Church, upon whom God bestowed St. Peter's privilege of binding and loosing souls. And the noble emperor Constantine justly inherited the dignity of the empire—he who by the grace of God was cured of leprosy and was baptized and became Christian and defender of the universal Holy Church, And it is thus recounted throughout the Holy Church in the story of St. Sylvester. And it is for that [end] that Remus and Romulus founded the city of Rome: It is called Rome for Romulus, because Romulus, who vanquished his brother Remus, made the city. And in all ways the city was called Rome

[25] That passage reads, "This city, which has the name of Rome, is the capital of Christendom. It was once the capital of the whole world when the great emperors were lords and governors over it, and conquered all the lands. Thus the whole world holds it in awe. That is why the title which is on the seal of the Roman emperor reads: 'Roma caput mundi tenet orbis frena rotundi.' The holy Apostles of God, Sts. Peter and Paul, converted it to the law [of] Jesus Christ and sanctified it with their holy blood. And as Rome had been the capital of all miscreance and error, thus God wanted it to be the capital of Christendom." (Ceste cite ki ad nun Rumme est chef de la crestiente e fu iadis chef de tut le mund quant le grant empereur en furent sires e guvernurs e conquistrent tutes terres. Si ke tut le mund la cremunt. pur co est le title tel ki est en la bulle lempereur de rume "Roma caput mundi tenet orbis frena rotundi (in rubric)" Li seint apostle deu seint pere e seint pol le cunvertirent a la lei Jesu christ e la sacerent de lur seint sanc. E cum ele estoit avant chef de tut mescreance ed errur, si vout deus kele fust chef de la crestiente).

[26] On some of those practices, see S. Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 345.

> for Romulus. And so much we have heard and hearkened to about Rome.[27]

Matthew Paris presents here a story of Rome in which empire and its transfer from pagan emperor to Christian emperor and eventually to pope, is legitimized through redemption. The city's pagan past is redeemed by its conversion to Christianity and by Constantine's 'inheritance' of the empire; Constantine's own conversion leads to his bestowal of authority on the first pope, Sylvester ("For it was for that [end] that Remus and Romulus founded the city of Rome").

On the last page of the map, Matthew Paris continued to build this genealogy of empire in his rendering of Jerusalem (Fig. 4.6). But as we will see, when it comes to Jerusalem, there will be a problem in trying to ground the Virgilian sense of history in the scriptural. First, however, Paris depicted Jerusalem in its ideal, heavenly guise, as a square city, seen from above, quoting its configuration in the Book of Revelations. Jerusalem is set in the midst of a thicket of texts that inscribe the Latin Crusader Kingdom with much legend, history, and anecdote. From the apocalyptic presence of the nation of Gog and Magog (Rev. 20, Ez. 38), trapped behind what Paris labels as the "Caspian Mountains," to the Ark of Noah, placed where it still rested after the flood, to an account of Damascus and its riches, these texts imagine for the user of the maps the distant and exotic, as well as the religious and prophetic lands that are the destination of the reader who manipulates these pages.[28] In the midst of all of these texts, the small layout of Jerusalem seems oddly out of proportion to its significance; and yet it resonates with the apocalypse in its four-square, ideal geometric dimensions modeling the Heavenly Jerusalem.

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[27] Ore ad deus fait iluce lese le apostoille ki est suverein prelat de seint iglise, a ki deus ad otre le privilege seint pere de almes lier e deslier. E dignite ad de empire par lotte e lestablie le noble empereur costentin, ki par la grace de deu gari de la lepre e fu baptize e devint crestien, e defendor de tute seinte iglise. Si cum recite est en tute seinte iglise en lestoire de seint Selvestre. E pur co ke Remus e Romulus funderent la cite de Rumme: apelee fu Rome de Romulo, kar Romulus ki sur vesque sun frere remus parfist la cite. E en teu manere fu la cite de Rome de Romulo apelee. E tant avur de Rome oi e entendu. CCCC, Ms. 26 fol. 3 recto. With a few emendations, this translation depends on that of Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 344 and note 49, along with the generous suggestions of Brill's anonymous reader.

[28] On Gog and Magog, see, for example, David Woodward, "Medieval Mappaemundi," in Harley and Woodward, eds., *History of Cartography*, I, 331–3; and Andrew Gow, "Gog and Magog on Mappaemundi and Early Printed Maps: Orientalizing Ethnography in the Apocalyptic Tradition." *Journal of Early Modern History*, 2.1 (1998): 1–28.

Moreover, Paris has depicted, as well, the historic and holy sites of Christianity, the Holy Sepulcher, the Temple of the Lord, and the Temple of Solomon. In essence, he has drawn for his brethren an image of Jerusalem that combines the historic city with its future, apocalyptic appearance.

In the center of the city, Paris also wrote a concise history, a foundational story of Jerusalem, now in the elevated language of Latin:

> the most worthy of all cities as much because in it the Lord was given over to death as because it is in the center of the world, and because it was the first dwelling place.[29]

In this brief inscription, Matthew gives three reasons for Jerusalem's status: Christ died there, it is in the middle of the world, and it was "the first dwelling-place." The first two phrases are commonplace; the last is a little problematic. It most likely refers to Psalm 132 (131), a psalm chanted in celebration of David's triumphant entry into Jerusalem with the Ark, and therefore a celebration of God's choice to dwell in the city (the Lord's first dwelling place).[30] In the psalm, David has sworn not to rest until he finds a dwelling place for the Lord. And when a site was chosen, the Lord swore an oath that the sons of David forever would sit upon his throne.[31] The dynastic language cannot be overemphasized. To the medieval audience, God's promise carries the unmistakable allusion to Christ's descent from the line of David, and therefore of Christ's own monarchic heritage.

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[29] "civitatum dignissima omnium tum quia in ipsa morti addictus est Dominus tum quia in medio mundi est tum quia prima habitacio fuit," CCCC Ms. 26, fol. 4 recto. I thank Prof. Daniel Sheerin and Brill's anonymous reader for their kind assistance with this passage. See H. Michelant and G. Raynaud, *Itinéraires á Jérusalem, rédigés en français aux Xieme, XIIeme et XIIIeme siècles*, Société de L'Orient Latin, série géographique, vol. 3, (Genéve: Jules-Guillaume Fick, 1882), 133; and Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 356.

[30] "The first dwelling place" is a fairly common descriptor of the Holy City. For example, a mid-thirteenth century copy of Peter of Poitiers' *Compendium historiae in genealogia Christi* (a genealogical history of Christ, here extended to include contemporary empires) has an image of Jerusalem labeled: the Chosen Dwelling Place, *Habitatio Volsi*. See Eton College Library, Ms. 96, fol. 7v.

[31] The Lord swore to David a sure oath / from which he will not turn back: / 'one of the sons of your body / I will set on your throne / If your sons keep my covenant / and my testimonies which I shall teach them / their sons also for ever / shall sit upon your throne.' / For the Lord has chosen Zion; / he has desired it for his dwelling place: / 'This is my resting place for ever; / here I will dwell, for I have desired it.' (Ps 132: 11–13).

And yet, within the tradition of *translatio imperii*, that dynasty often took on the overtones of empire. In a copy of Peter of Poitiers' *Compendium historiae in genealogia Christi*, which was probably produced at St. Albans in the mid-thirteenth century, the Kingdom of David is one of the key nodal points in this illustrated register of the succession of the world's empires.[32] Peter of Poitiers' *Genealogia Christi* was a concise summation of universal history that relied principally upon *translatio imperii*, both to present history and to update it to include contemporary empires (in this case Plantagenet England). Matthew Paris was doubtless aware of this and other similar works.

Psalm 132 is one of the gradual psalms that was sung during Vespers; the monks at St. Albans would have, therefore, been intimately familiar with it (they had to memorize the psalms, as they sang them several times a day), and would have recognized in Paris' text a quotation of Jerusalem's foundational myth.[33] There is also, overlaid, the apocalyptic resonance of its ideal, square geometry.

But how might this imperial heritage cooperate with the genealogy of city-foundings linked, in Matthew Paris' itinerary map, across the spaces of the Latin West? Whereas Brutus fled Rome to found London, no such direct connections existed to unite Jerusalem with the empires of the West. The itinerary seems to suggest an implicit transfer of priority, from the Jewish capital of Jerusalem to the Christian capital of Rome. God had chosen Jerusalem as the first dwelling-place. Christ's death there, and his promise to return at the end of time, transformed the city into *the* sacred Christian center.

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[32] Eton College Library, Ms. 96. The manuscript has received little attention, though most agree it was probably produced at St. Albans in the mid-thirteenth century. See M.R. James, *Catalogue of Manuscripts at Eton College Library* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1895), no. 96; and Nigel Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts*, II, in *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), entry no. 90; Richard Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 116 and 225; and François Fossier, "Chroniques universelles en forme de rouleau á la fin du Moyen-Age," *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1980–1981), 163–83. For the most thorough discussion of Peter of Poitiers, see Philip S. Moore, *The Works of Peter of Poitiers* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1936), 97–117. C.f. Hilpert, who argues that this manuscript can not be securely associated with St. Albans; Hans-Eberhard Hilpert, "Geistliche Bildung und Laienbildung: Zur Überlieferung der Schulschrift *Compendium historiae in genealogia Christi* (Compendium veteris testamenti) des Petrus von Poitiers (d. 1205) in England," *Journal of Medieval History* 11.4 (1985): 315–32, esp. 321–2.

[33] *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed., J. Strayer (New York: Scribner, 1989), "Psalmody," vol. 10, 200–2.

These stories fixed its status as both the originary (i.e. originating) city *and* the final apocalyptic city to come. Between those events, between the city as Jewish capital and apocalyptic capital, Christian history shifts to Rome and ever westward, as Paris recounted in the story of Constantine as the first Holy Roman Emperor and his transfer of authority over Christianity to the pope. In a way, Jerusalem's imperial heritage, which had been vested in the Ark of the Covenant and in Christ's death, is *continued* in Rome's establishment of the papacy and its leadership over Christendom. Rome does not quite displace or supplant Jerusalem, but the course of events has shifted (temporarily) from one center to another.

This lateral movement of world events is even performed in the design of the maps and the workings of the flap (Fig. 4.7). The flap of Rome may be turned over and into the space of Palestine. Such a configuration is certainly invited by the dynamics of the map's design; and, when accomplished, the two cities stand opposite each other across the space of the folios. In this configuration of the maps' dynamics, Rome and Jerusalem are the only two walled, rectilinear cities on the page (complete with towers, portals and crenellations) and so call attention to themselves as cities similar in design and to some extent in associative meanings. Both are principal or generative cities, centers of civilization. At the same time, they are opposites. Rome is worldly and corrupt; Jerusalem is ideal and heavenly.[34] The working of the map's flap establishes, in clear contrast, across the confusions of text on this bi-folio spread, a connection between the cities in which those foundational stories are brought into alignment.

The itinerary's conjunction of the classical founding of Rome with the biblical founding of Jerusalem does indeed attempt to fit classical history within the larger paradigm of a Christian historiography, which begins, at least in the case here, with Davidic authority. But more than a simple static positioning of the two conflictual historiographies, Paris' design of the Monastic version of these maps purposefully connects the two city foundings as part of the continuing narrative or genealogy of empires. The appended flap asks for a juxtaposition of the two cities, which then elides the temporal gaps

[34] Matthew Paris' invectives against the Papal curia are legion. See Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 243ff. On this opposition in the thought of St. Augustine, see Johannes van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: A Study into Augustine's "City of God" and the Sources of His Doctrine of the Two Cities* (New York: Brill, 1991).

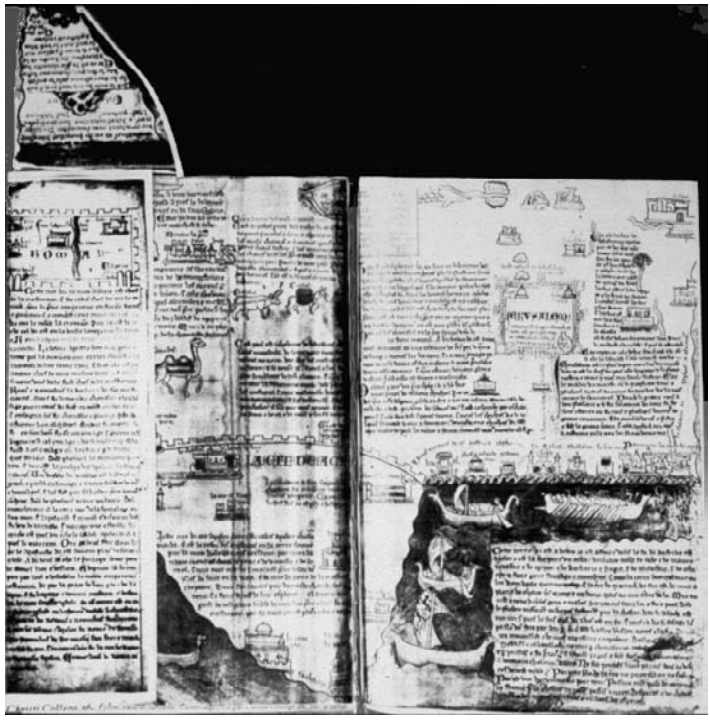

Fig. 4.7. The "Monastic" Itinerary Map: Rome flap folded into Holy Land. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Ms. 26, fols. 3v and 4r. This image has been digitally manipulated to mimic this configuration of the manuscript. Composed after images with permission of the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

or disjunctions that might otherwise obtain between the founding of Rome and the founding of Jerusalem. At the same time, that configuration of flap and map subsumes the classical story of city-founding within Paris' larger topos of Rome's redemption. The strategy undergirding this elision and redemption, we shall see, lies in a newly developed medieval understanding of the course of history as one that tracks a straight line across a divinely ordained geography.

History writing in the thirteenth century had become infused with the theories of history as explained by Hugh of St. Victor (1096–1141), a monk and scholar teaching in Paris. Matthew Paris made copies of some of his quite popular books. To understand history, thought

Hugh, one must have a sense of its direction, and its goal.[35] History thus became a system; and to understand that system, Hugh began with what he called the *series narrationis*, an organized and continuous sequence of events, which he ordered by place, time and significance. Like the *Genealogia Christi* (and its undergirding structure of *translatio imperii*), Hugh posited a kind of plot to the events of the world, which should be ordered out accordingly. The Divine Plan, for medieval historians and theologians, was the overarching plot, which thereby guided their choices of what events of the world to include and how to interpret them. In addition, time itself became meaningful not simply as duration, but as a progression of the six ages leading to the apocalypse.[36]

In one of his books (Book 4 of his *De arca Noe Morali*), copies of which were made especially for St. Albans, Hugh arranged certain aspects of the *series narrationis* (place and time) as a straight line across the geography of the world in support of his proposition that the course of human events had drawn to a close.[37] He wrote:

> The order of place and the order of time seem to agree almost completely in the course of events. Thus it appears to be established by divine providence that what was done at the beginning of the ages, at the outset of the world, took place in the East, and finally, as time runs along to its End, the completion of events should penetrate even as far as the West. Hence we may acknowledge that the End of the World

[35] As McGinn has pointed out, the identification of an overall "unity and structure of history as a divinely predetermined totality," is one of the hallmarks of apocalyptic thinking, the mentalité that at once precedes the apocalyptic interpretation and suffuses its arrangement of history precisely to underscore the progression of events leading to its end: "The desire to understand history—its unity, its structure, its goal, the future hope which it promises—is not a passing interest or momentary whim, but a perennial human concern. A sense of belonging in time, as well as the need to understand the special significance of the present, is the anthropological root of apocalyptic systems of thought." See the "Introduction," in Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Thinking in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 1–36, esp. 10, 15, and quote, 30.

[36] R.W. Southern, "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing: 2. Hugh of St. Victor and the Idea of Historical Development," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 21 (1971): 159–79.

[37] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 232, note 35; and Rodney Thomson, *Manuscripts from St. Albans Abbey 1066–1235* (Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 1982), 107–8.

> approaches because the sequence of events has reached the geographical end of the world.[38]

For Hugh of St. Victor, and I argue for Matthew Paris, geography embodies theology. The Divine Plan was registered in a geography that was made sacred by the succession of empires understood to progress towards their Western extreme. Providence had ordained that the course of civilization should flow from East to West and that the Apocalypse was revealed or predicted in this pattern, as the course of events reached its western extreme. And it is providential history that resolves what conflicts there may have been between a Virgilian and an Augustinian historiography, using the former, in effect, in support of the latter.

The Royal Version

In the Royal version of the itineraries, something else seems to be going on, something at once less philosophical and yet more ideological. In brief, the conflicts or tensions between a Virgilian recounting of imperial history and an Augustinian-Orosian scheme of predictive history have been erased in this fair copy, and replaced instead with an emphasis upon the direct descent from a classical order, based upon Virgil's stories, of what can be termed a British imperial rulership.[39] This lineage is coupled with an appeal to the

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[38] McGinn, *Visions*, 111, Migne, *PL*, CLXXVI, 677, *De arca Noe morali* (iv. 9); my italics.

[39] Here, I no longer mean to refer to the more loosely defined idea of empire as expressed in the medieval topos of *translatio imperii*, but to the desire (and its satisfaction) on the part of the kings of England to rule over not only England, but Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as their Anglo-Norman, Angevin and Plantagenet patrimony on the continent. In this way, this second, later version of the itinerary represents not only a culmination of the movements of *translatio imperii,* but also, as we shall see, of a reaching back across the lands represented in the itinerary, to take control of the Kingdom of Sicily and Apulia as a satisfaction of expansionist, imperialist desire. C.f. Ralph V. Turner "The Problem of Survival for the Angevin 'Empire': Henry II's and His Sons' Vision versus Late Twelfth-Century Realities," *American Historical Review* 100, 1 (1995), 78–96. But as the title suggests, and as the article's last line makes clear, "empire," at least as the kings saw it, was a thing to be wished for: "Not only Henry II but the entire Plantagenet line believed that the Angevin 'empire' was worth preserving as a family enterprise possessing some measure of political cohesion." My thanks to the anonymous reader for bringing this citation to my attention. See also John Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and Political Values* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell: 2000).

monarch's delight in visual pleasure and the imaginative possibilities of mapping distant, yet desirable lands.

I believe a different scribe and artist made the Royal version, probably for the king of England, Henry III (r. 1216–1272) or maybe even the later Edward I (r. 1272–1307). Whether it is possible to prove that proposition is less germane to my discussion than the end product or results of the maps' different conceptions of geography. But it is perhaps easier to pursue the fiction of authorial intent and patronage as a way to outline the geographical differences that are at stake in the maps (again taking geographical to mean simultaneously ideological). If the Royal version was not made specifically for Edward I and in support of his claim of Scotland, it was, at least, intended for the acquisitive, royal gaze of the King of England (acquisitive of either Scotland or Sicily). While the neologism 'royal gaze' may do a disservice to its Lacanian origins, it nonetheless captures the desirous and acquisitive motivations of this patronal class.[40]

The Royal itinerary carries forward the same overall shape and design of its earlier model, but differs in some significant aspects. It is more formal, simpler, and easier to follow. For example, on folio 1v of the Monastic version (Fig. 4.5) Paris had labeled the city of Paris with the abbreviation of his name, "Paris'is" (Parisiensis). We can take this as a kind of signature, a trace of the artist's presence, if not his biography (some scholars believe he came from Paris, thus the name).[41] That kind of informal, playful pun was not unusual in

[40] The groundwork for theorizing the motivations and proclivities of the male, patriarchal gaze was laid out in Laura Mulvey's essay, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 14–26. I do not have the space here to explore fully the implications of theorizing a 'royal gaze,' but instead point to the obvious relish that monarchic patrons took in the luxurious, the exotic, and the desire either to celebrate or acquire that which they asked their artists to depict. While not fully developed in the literature, the idea at least of the 'royal gaze' has been noted by J.J.G. Alexander, "Labeur and Paresse: Ideological Representations of Medieval Peasant Labor," *Art Bulletin* 72.3 (1990): 436–52; Brigitte Buettner, "Past Presents: New Year's Gifts at the Valois Court, ca.1400," *Art Bulletin* 83.4 (2001): 539–625; and Jay M. Smith, " 'Our Sovereign's Gaze': Kings, Nobles, and State Formation in Seventeenth-Century France," *French Historical Studies* 18.2 (1993): 396–415.

[41] Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 1. Clanchy sees in Matthew's use of *signa* a distinctly Victorine attitude and, especially given Paris' name, believed he was a product of the Paris schools. See Michael Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 215.

Paris' work that was destined for his abbey. But it does not occur in the Royal version.

The Royal version is finished; the route is complete and leads more deliberately to Jerusalem, that is with fewer choices for the route and none of the occasions to contemplate the flaps' interactivity of geography. In addition, the role of the flaps in the Royal version has been dramatically reduced, thus eliminating the opportunity to interweave stories of city-founding (Fig. 4.8). The *Historia Anglorum* (c. 1250–59), which this version originally prefaced, was itself produced as an abridged copy of English history, its content edited for the king. And the embellishment of the itineraries with gold leaf and their insertion as a preface to that manuscript would only have been appropriate for an audience accustomed to the luxuries of court and from whom the abbey would wish to curry favor. History writing at St. Albans was well known to the court, and kings and nobles visited the abbey frequently.[42]

Some rather direct evidence suggests that the Royal version of the itinerary, and indeed the *Historia Anglorum* as a whole, was either produced as a presentation copy, or retailored for presentation, perhaps for the very specific event of Edward I's claim to Scotland.[43] Unnoticed in the previous scholarship on this map, two folios preceded the book and its itinerary as fly-leaves; they are paginated in the upper right-hand corner with lowercase Roman numerals. The otherwise blank verso of folio 1 has a note in a late thirteenth-century hand: *de homagio Regionum Scotorum fo 3 / fo 6* (concerning the homage [due] from the region of the Scots, folios 3 through 6).[44] This probably refers to Edward I as King of Scotland, who in 1292, had executed a search of monastic archives for proof of his right to rule all of the island, in furtherance of what is known as 'The Great Cause.' Edward I had these records searched for any legitimizing historical anecdote, and in the process became responsible for much of the fourteenth-century popularity of Arthurian Legend and its

[42] Vaughan, *Matthew Paris,* 1–34; Vaughan counts ten visits by the King to St. Albans that are recorded by Matthew Paris between 1223 and 1258, 12–13.

[43] That the *Historia Anglorum* was a presentation copy intended for royal visitors can be inferred from the judicious editing that Matthew conducted of its text: excision of information irrelevant to English history and his own rather harsh opinions of the king; see Vaughan, *Matthew Paris,* 72–4.

[44] My thanks to Brill's anonymous reader for his generous assistance translating this passage.

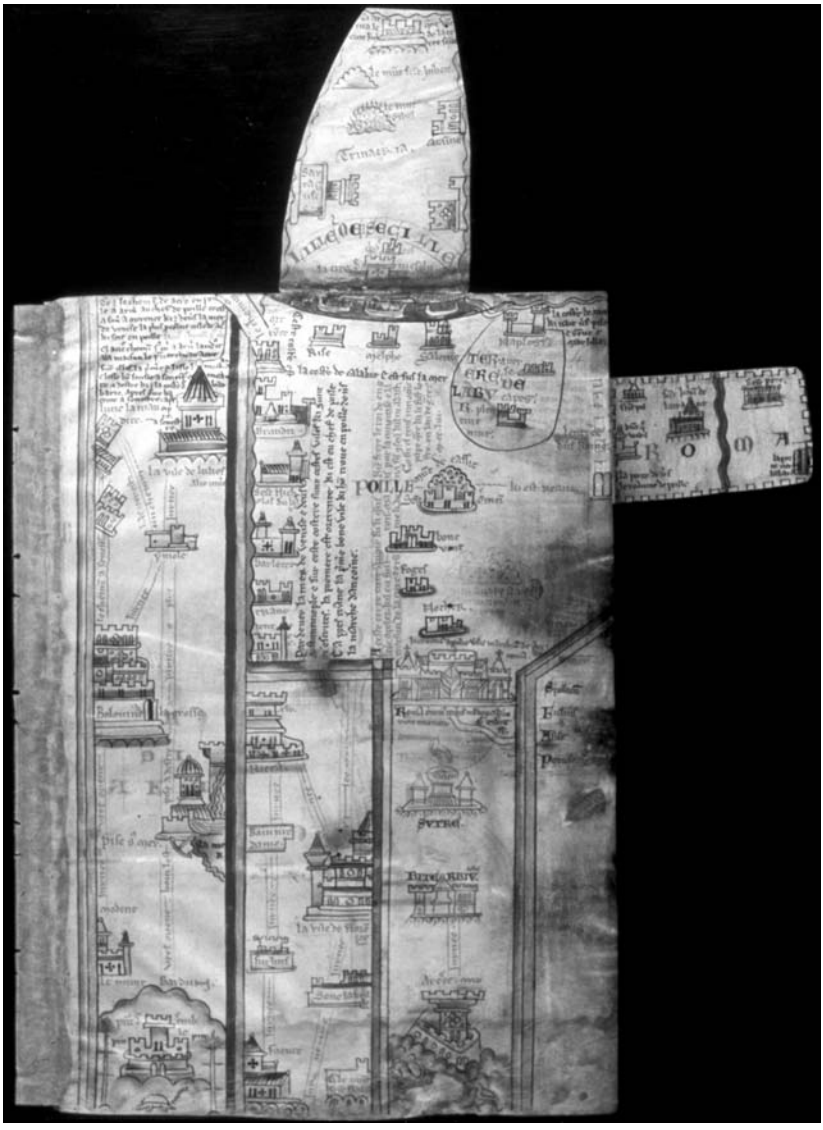

Fig. 4.8. The "Royal" Itinerary Map: Italy, Rome, and Apulia. British Library, Ms. Royal 14 C vii, fol. 4r. By permission of the British Library.

celebration of a pan-island monarchy. Edward fixed on Geoffrey of Monmouth's legend of Brutus's founding of England.[45] That legend is placed just above London and is recounted in both of our versions of the itineraries. The Royal version of the itinerary originally occupied folios 3 through 6 and so what I suggest is that when Edward put out the call to the major monasteries of England for all records that might support his claim, the house of St. Albans responded by removing these four folios and sending them to the king. These folios may have been made specifically for that occasion, or simply embellished and then, rather hurriedly, a map of England added onto its last page.

Another inscription written on the Italy page of the Royal itinerary underscores the imperial aim of these maps (Fig. 4.8). This inscription has been used to date this version to between 1254 and 1259, when Paris died, but that, of course, requires accepting Paris as its author. Translated, that passage reads:

> Count Richard, brother of the King of England, was called to be the king of all this land. But because of the greed and treason of the court of Rome, he gave him the advice not to go there. This was in the time of the Pope Innocent IV, who made him the offer in the year of grace 1253.[46]

Paris tells this story in the *Chronica Majora*. The pope's envoy had tried to influence Richard to accept the Kingdom of Sicily, currently held by the Holy Roman Emperor, Conrad, son of Frederick II. Richard, however, would have to conquer it at his own expense. Richard is then reported by Paris to have said that the offer was as if someone had said, "I give or sell you the moon, climb up and take it."[47] However, King Henry III (r. 1216–1272), Richard's brother, was eager to have the imperial crown for his younger son Edmond, supporting therefore a tenuous claim to imperial stature long asso-

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[45] Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England: 1066–1307*, 40–1, 152–3. R.A. Griffiths "Edward I, Scotland and the Chronicles of English Religious Houses," *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 6 (1979): 191–9. See also Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 356–75.

[46] "A ceste terre tute avoir fu li enjeuns Richard frere le roi de eng / terre apelez kil en fust rois, mais pur la cuneitise e la traisun de la curt de rume li duna sunt conseit kil ni alast. Co fu ei tens innocent pape quart ki le fist lostre en lan de grace MCCLIII." I wish to thank Prof. Peter Dembowski for his generous help in the transcription and translation of this passage; any error is my own.

[47] Matthew Paris, *Matthæi Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica majora*, ed., Henry R. Luard, v. 5 (London: Longman & Co., 1872–1883), 457–8, quote 457.

ciated with Norman land-holdings such as Sicily. Innocent IV (r. 1243–54) acquiesced, but as preparations were made to finalize the deal, Conrad died. The pope, on his own, occupied Sicily and ignored any claim of Henry III's. In the itinerary's inscription concerning these events, Paris seems somewhat disparaging of the pope's offer and of the prestige that might accrue to it; and when he later summarized these events in his *Abbreviatio Chronicorum Angliae*, he edited out the reactions of Richard, which cast a bad light upon the king's decision to accept the offer.[48] The inscription in the itinerary, "But because of the greed and treason of the court of Rome, he gave him the advice not to go there," lays what blame there is squarely with the pope. The identity of that advising 'he,' is anyone's guess; the term may refer obliquely to King Henry III, as a way to recognize, without direct address, its audience.

In Paris' inscription, the past tense of the last sentence, "[t]his was in the time of Pope Innocent IV," helped Richard Vaughan date this itinerary to sometime after 1254, when Innocent IV died, and before 1259, when Matthew Paris died. But the inscription itself assumes a distant historicity to the events, and so suggests that it was written a good while after Innocent's death, that is after the death of any one of a number of briefly reigning popes in the late thirteenth century.

Most important, however, for discerning the royal character of this map (and therefore its audience's royal character), the spaces of the Royal version have been radically altered, making the map a far less pliable machine of historical exegesis. While the foundational story of London remains the same in both versions—and its story of Brutus was crucial to Edward's claim of overlordship of Scotland—in the Royal version, the flap depicting Rome and its story has been dramatically trimmed to only the rectangular city outline (Fig. 4.8). On the back of this small flap is this text: "The City of Rome. Remus and Romulus, the sons of Mars and the Moon founded it and it was made of the remnants of Troy. Romulus called it Rome after his

[48] Matthew Paris, *Matthæi Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Historia Anglorum, sive, ut vulgo dicitur, Historia minor. Item, ejusdem Abbreviatio chronicorum Angliae*, ed., Sir Frederic Madden, v. 3 (London: Longmans & Co., 1866–9), 338. The *Abbreviatio Chronicorum Angliae* is contained in British Library Cotton Ms. Claudius D vi, and is a reduced summary of Matthew's other more fulsome histories. It also contains one of the earliest maps of England, likely by Matthew himself, discussed below.

name"[49] This trimming eliminates the monastic story of the transfer of authority to Constantine and later to the pope. The royal reader is not concerned with the hoary issues of an appropriate paradigm for historical enquiry, but rather sees directly the connection between Brutus and Romulus, and can therefore trace his own heritage as a king of Britain back to the ennobling, classical and Trojan past.

Furthermore, when the king's eye fell upon the holy city of Jerusalem on the following page, there were no cryptic texts to decipher, no obscure allusion to the psalms or the foundational story of the city itself (Fig. 4.9). Instead, the king read, simply, "of all the cities, the most dignified city." His gaze upon Jerusalem probably carried with it the desire to capture it. The lost, but holy city continued to fascinate would-be crusaders throughout the thirteenth century, and both Henry III (r. 1216–72) and Edward I (r. 1272–1307) had taken multiple vows to crusade. In 1270, Edward actually fulfilled his vow, and although the crusade was itself somewhat lackluster in outcome, an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Edward added notoriety and a tinge of heroics to his royal endeavor.[50] Yet despite such efforts, the dream of a Christian empire in the Holy Land continued to recede in the face of the Latin West's failed attempts to retake Jerusalem. And the extent to which the city appears isolated, distant and only remotely available to the user of these maps registers the nostalgic quality that I think characterizes the drawings of the city in both versions (the one probably a copy of the other). And in that vein of nostalgia, Henry III's unfulfilled vow to go on crusade, or Edward I's actual, though unsuccessful crusade, doubtless colored their perceptions of these pages with the desirous and acquisitive longing that those who aspire to empire seem always to nurture.[51]

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[49] "....la cite de Rome. Remus e Romulus fiz martis & de une lune la funderent. & le fu faite des remasilles de troie. Roml's lapela rome de sun nun."

[50] Prestwich and Lloyd have argued that his reputation, at home and abroad, was bolstered a great deal by suggesting that he could again mount a Crusade to recapture the city. Prestwich, *Edward I*, 44; and Simon Lloyd, "The Lord Edward's Crusade, 1270–2: Its Setting and Significance," in *War and Government in the MA: Essays in Honor of J.O. Prestwich,* eds., John Gillingham and J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, England: Boydell and Brewer, 1984), 120–33.

[51] We know that Henry III visited St. Albans several times and that he was aware of Matthew Paris' chronicle writing.

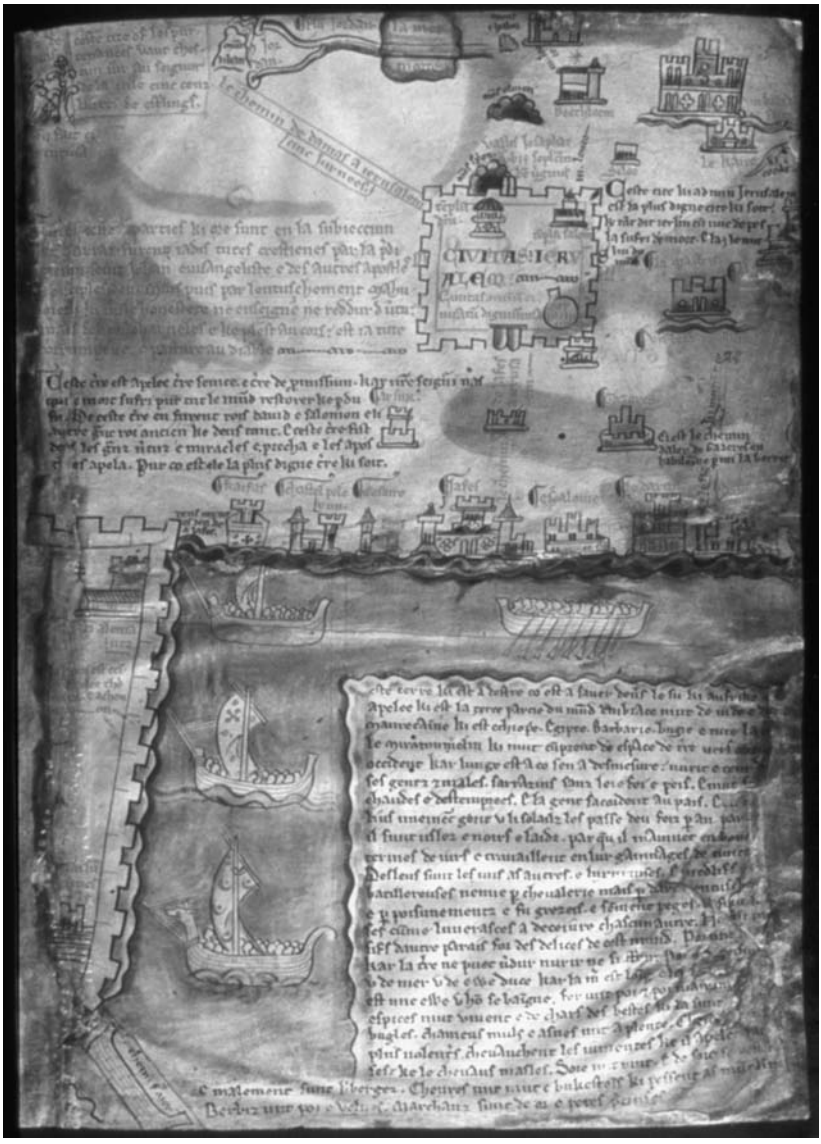

Fig. 4.9. The "Royal" Itinerary Map: Jerusalem and the Holy Land. British Library, Ms. Royal 14 C vii, fol. 5r. By permission of the British Library.

Plantagenet Cartography

Cartography had long served as a privileged agent in the Anglo-Norman expression of such imperial claims, that expression being built upon the fiction that the power to display the map could be synonymous with the actual control of its spaces. The kingly display of maps voices not just the king's ambition, but puts forward an argument legitimizing his command of the map's subject matter. There had been a long history of Plantagenet assertion and pretense to empire, in which maps of the world, just as these itineraries, did not act alone, but were combined with history-telling as a means to express concretely the culminations of history through the display of the world's spaces. Such displays combined history and cartography, a rather time-honored tradition which dated as far back as the emperors Augustus and Charlemagne and was continued by the later Norman and Plantagenet dynasties.[52]

The Plantagenet kings of England deployed cartographic imagery, maps or geographic descriptions, as part of textual and visual programs that aimed to assert power and imperial ambitions. These commissions fashioned a geography that was at the same time genealogical, creating a mystical geography that celebrated the power of the new Angevin princes. Nathalie Bouloux has described several examples of the legendary stories written at the Anglo-Norman court of Henry II (r. 1154–1189), stories that deployed maps of the world as a symbol of the king's knowledge and control of the realm or even the world.[53] The Alexandrian cycle of *romans* became a very popular model that relied upon the display of geography—maps of the land under the control of the king—to further its imperialist agenda. For Bouloux, the knowledge of the world, connoted by the display of maps, conveys both the king's power and his ambitions. The king is a philosopher, and at the same time, a conqueror; he knows the world, and the places and histories of the world, and as its conqueror, takes control over that history and its trajectory. A relationship is thus established between the territorial power of the prince and his

[52] On early examples of *mappaemundi* owned or displayed by kings, see Marcia Kupfer, "Medieval World Maps," 262–88, esp. 264–9; and Dilke, "Maps in the Service of the State: Roman Cartography to the End of the Augustan Era," in *The History of Cartography*, I, 201–11.

[53] Nathalie Bouloux, "Les Usages de la Géographie à la cour des Plantagenêts dans la seconde moitié du XIIe Siècle," *Médiévales* 24 (1993): 131–48.

knowledge of the world, and that relationship is contemporary with a new affirmation of the state, for which the motif of the *mappamundi* is one vehicle.[54]

Such pretense to domination, and the map's complicity in it, is cunningly at play in Paris' ruler 'portrait' of Alexander the Great in the *Chronica Majora* (Fig. 4.10). This marginal illustration accompanies Paris' text in the *Chronica* concerning the classical past, and, I think, both celebrates Alexander as a world conqueror in the model adopted by the early *romans* of medieval courtly culture, and provides a visual critique of that ambition, envisaged here as *superbia,* for which Alexander was otherwise known by thirteenth century moralists.[55] Alexander, wearing a rather enlarged crown, sits on a throne, his feet astride a lion and dragon, traditional symbols of Christ's majesty. With his right hand on hip and arm akimbo, he lifts up a tri-partite representation of the globe and gazes wistfully or longingly, I think, at the object of his desire. There cannot help but be a somewhat ironic commentary in Paris' depiction of the *superbia* that characterizes emperors who would entertain such global domination.[56] His drawing witnesses clearly the desire that kings brought to their viewing of maps, in essence satirizing the royal gaze.

King Henry III (r. 1216–72) continued the Plantagenet use of cartography as an instrument to assert imperial ambitions in the decorations he devised for his various residences.[57] Henry chose stories and maps that located imperial privileges in the great persons and conquests of historical leaders, which, as *exempla*, espoused the exercise of such privileges. In 1237, Henry III ordered that the Romances of Alexander should be painted in the "Chamber of Alexander" at Clarendon and again in 1252 in the Queen's Chamber at Nottingham Castle. And he may have ordered that a large, display

[54] See, for example, the cartography produced for Roger II of Sicily, discussed in S. Maqbul Ahmad, "Cartography of al-Sharïf al Idrïsï," in *The History of Cartography*, II, *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 156–72.

[55] Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 137–8.

[56] See Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 138, who understands the image's purposeful conflation of Christ's iconography with a ruler portrait as an expression of the eschatological scheme of the *Chronica Majora* in its reliance on imperial succession as an index of the coming Apocalypse.

[57] These decorations became increasingly formalized as a program of state that asserted royal rights and privileges in response to the political turmoil of Henry's later reign. See Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster* (London: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1986), 43–5.

Fig. 4.10. Alexander the Great in the *Chronica Majora*. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Ms. 26, fol. 12v. By permission of the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

mappamundi be painted on the wall of his Painted Chamber at Westminster; Matthew Paris refers to such in an inscription on his one surviving *mappamundi.* Interestingly, the *Close Rolls*, copies of royal letters recorded in roll format, had used the term "*magna historia,*" probably to refer to this map.[58] And a few years later, Henry ordered two more maps to be painted as decorations to important rooms in his castle at Winchester.[59]

We do not know what Henry III's maps looked like, but they would nonetheless have participated in a long tradition of the royal display of maps which drew upon a map's ability to assert power and even putative control over the spaces depicted.[60] In fact, the arrangement of the scenes in Henry's famous Painted Chamber, which employed images from the Old Testament and classical history, and the retention (if not commission) of a large display map, provides an analog on a larger scale of the interrelationships that Paris constructed in his itineraries between graphic displays of the world and the recounting of history itself.

In his account of London's founding, Matthew Paris redeployed the imperialist, Trojan claims made popular by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Geoffrey's account, as well as Paris' various chronicle accounts of the early history of England, form the broader textual tapestry from which Paris constructed his nucleated version which was then rendered in the itinerary. To grasp more fully that nucleated version, we should recall the story. Brutus, having left Italy, wanders in search of his destiny and seeks at the temple of Diana the secret foreknowledge that is the hallmark of world-conquering emperors. There, Diana speaks to Brutus in a vision:

> Brutus, beyond the setting of the sun, past the realms of Gaul, there lies an island in the sea, once occupied by giants. Now it is empty and

[58] The *Close Rolls* records that King Henry III had requested that some decorative work continue beneath the *magna historia*, and that this great history was to be conserved during the redecoration, as cited in Binski, *Painted Chamber,* 16–17, 22, 43–4. See also, Pamela Tudor-Craig, "The Painted Chamber at Westminster," *The Archaeological Journal* 114 (1957): 92–105.

[59] Tancred Borenius, "The Cycle of Images in the Palaces and Castles of Henry III," *Journal of the Warburg and Courthauld Institute* 6 (1943): 40–50. It is sometimes speculated that there was some cross-fertilization between this city scene and the sketches of cities in Matthew Paris' itineraries.

[60] In fact, we do not know that Henry ordered the painting of a *mappamundi* at all. But for a speculative account of Henry's world map and a reading of its program of statesmanship, see Birkholz, *The King's Two Maps.*

> ready for your people; and for your descendants it will be a second Troy. A race of kings shall be born there from your stock and the round circle of the whole earth shall be subject to them.[61]

It is just this "round circle of the whole earth" that Paris had shown under the controlling, desirous gaze of his Alexander the Great. Doubtless that language would have triggered the cartographic imaginations of first Geoffrey's and then later Paris' readers. These stories of Brutus mark the island of England as an empire, an empire whose origins lie in the East and whose future will encompass the round circle of the whole earth.

The emphasis on the conquest of the island, civilizing and uniting its entirety under one king, paralleled Edward I's (r. 1272–1307) own view of his historical right and legitimacy to rule Scotland. It is probably no understatement that the geographical containment of the island itself proffered its own form of manifest destiny, a sense in which the naturalness and completeness of its borders argued for a single polity. As Michael Clanchy has discussed, a growing sense of national unity was repeatedly articulated in thirteenth-century chronicles through descriptions of England's insularity. An anonymous author of the thirteenth century described England in his *Flores Historiarum* as having, "the sea for a wall, and ports for gates, fortified by strong castles; in you, knights, clergy, and merchants all flourished."[62] And when it came time for Geoffrey of Monmouth to give the island the classical heritage it deserved, he provided as well a convenient and preemptive ethnic cleansing of the island: "beyond the setting of the sun,…. there lies an island in the sea, once occupied by giants. Now it is empty and ready for your people." An island, a complete and integral geography, emptied of its savage and unnatural inhabitants lay waiting for Brutus and his descendants to rule.

On the back of the last page of the Royal itinerary is a map of Britain (Fig. 4.11), a map that gives full expression to these claims of history and to those of Edward I to rule the whole island, satisfying, ultimately, the desirous gaze of the English king. The map was quickly drawn and it does not have nearly as many embellishments

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[61] It is well worth noting that this story of Brutus's destiny in England clearly expresses the ideological foundation for the later British Empire. The text is quoted in Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 160.

[62] Cited in Michael Clanchy, *England and Its Rulers: 1066–1272*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 175.

Fig. 4.11. The "Royal" Map of England. British Library, Ms. Royal 14C vii, fol. 5v. By permission of the British Library.

as either the itineraries or Matthew Paris' other maps of England.[63] But what it offered the royal gaze was far more significant, especially to Edward I. An inscription runs the length of the island and unites all that lay beneath it with the bold, but simple rubric "Britannia." To the side, another label reads, " Now called England (Anglia)." Up above, and actually in Scotland, is the text, "which encompasses Scotland, Galloway and Wales." This sort of general, unifying and all encompassing label for the total island (as it is referred to elsewhere on the map) does not appear in the other three versions of these, the earliest maps of England.

There are four different versions of the map of England. Because of the similarity of the contents of these maps, and their situation within his books, scholars have assumed that Matthew Paris produced, or at least oversaw the production, of all four versions. Yet J.P. Gilson showed that the Royal version of these maps had the least in common with the other three.[64] It adds information not found in them, lacks some other information, gives a generally different outline to the island of England, and contains several more place names, especially in Yorkshire, than the other three. Most significant for our purposes, it pays more attention to Scotland and to the route running through it. A brief comparison with the map in Paris's abbreviated chronicle, the *Abbreviatio chronicorum*, (Fig. 4.12) shows an altogether different attitude towards depicting England.[65] This version, the most complete one, shows corrugated coastlines and a general density of information—place names and legends—while the Royal version is far more loosely conceived and thinly informed. In addition, the script of some of the place names is markedly different and resembles a later thirteenth century hand.

These maps of England offer a broad and expansive view of the nation that, through the royal gaze, asserts forms of control over their territories. Not all scholars agree with this approach. In a recent discussion of these maps of England, Daniel Birkholz treated them

[63] For the maps of England by Matthew Paris, see, with facsimiles and transcriptions, *Four Maps of Great Britain Designed by Matthew Paris about 1250*, ed., J.P. Gilson (London: British Museum, 1928); J.B. Michell, "Early Maps of Great Britain, I: The Maps of Matthew Paris," *The Geographical Journal*, 81 (1933): 27–35. See also, Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 243–4; and Lewis, *The Art of Matthew Paris*, 364 -72.

[64] *Four Maps of Great Britain*, ed., Gilson, 4.

[65] The map is located in British Library, Cotton Ms. Claudius D vi, fol. 12v.

Fig. 4.12. Map of England in the *Abbreviatio chronicorum*. British Library, Cotton Ms. Claudius D vi, fol. 12v. By permission of the British Library.

as if they were so many attempts at an idealized, unitary idea.[66] Birkholz folded the Royal version into the project of Matthew's other maps of England and so was able to categorize them all as a "failed compromise" between an itinerary—because it is still constructed along a central route running the length of the island—and a territorial map—because it quite obviously encompasses the whole island. In this model of failed compromise, Birkholz, I think mistakenly, denies a territorial ideology to these maps of England because, he says, they are less about unifying the broad expanse of all of England through a network of relations than they are about outlining an itinerary as a way to negotiate only part of the island, and a rather limited one at that. However, with the profusion of legends and place names, marginal notes and the addition of monuments (e.g. the Hadrianic and Antonine Walls, in Fig. 4.12), any one of the four maps encourages a broad and expansive view of the entire island, one that would satisfy the acquisitive and controlling gaze of either King Henry III or his son Edward I. The king, in control of all that he rules, reaffirms his authority in the very practice of his gaze: looking at a map of the realm is made equal to asserting control over its lands.

The ideology of a British empire, I would argue, is quite specifically put forward in this last copy of these maps of England, the one on the back of the Royal itinerary (Fig. 4.11).[67] In addition to being looser, freer, and far sketchier, it also does away with the ancient Hadrianic and Antonine walls. In all of the other three versions, these walls quite emphatically divide the island and its people, and are usually labeled, "the wall dividing the Angles and the Picts" (e.g., Fig. 4.12). In the Royal version (Fig. 4.11), which clearly lacks these dividing walls, the inscription of Britannia and its explanation of

[66] Birkholz, *The King's Two Maps*, 72–5. More recently, Katharine Breen analyzed the Royal version of the map of England as an integral part of the itinerary, and argued that they were of one production and that the map of England provided for a return journey, the sequence of which, "uses Jerusalem to sacralize the geography of Britain, and so makes it, for the first time, representable and usable." Katharine Breen, "Returning Home from Jerusalem: Matthew Paris's First Map of Britain in Its Manuscript Context," *Representations* 89 (2005): 59–93. Breen does not compare the different itineraries nor the maps of England and accepts uncritically its authorship by Paris. The manuscript context she uses, I believe, is a later construction.

[67] For the ideology of empire inscribed in English geography of a later period, see Lesley Cormack, *Charting an Empire: Geography of the English Universities, 1580–1620* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 225–30.

precisely what that means, stretches along the entire length of the island and serves to present a coherent, unified and quite purposeful argument in support of Edward I's claim to Scotland. The Royal map of England made a fitting addition to the already embellished itinerary. Its added emphasis on Scotland and incorporation of that region into the island now labeled "Britannia" suggests all the more strongly that it was crafted for the particular needs of Edward I in his claim to Scotland.

This Royal map of England makes visible statements about territorial ideology and does so in its insistence on capturing all of the island on the page. Next to the city of London, an inscription reads, "If this page were laid open, this total island ought to be longer."[68] This inscription has always been taken to show either a precocious understanding, on the part of Matthew Paris, of relative scale in cartography or as a naive confession of a failure to plan properly. If we accept that the map was copied from one of Matthew's others, then we arrive at a different reading. The map was probably made in haste, probably to satisfy Edward I's call for documents and evidence. In this inscription next to London, the author used the word "*pateretur*," which generally means "to lie or stand open," as if somehow the copyist encountered a problem with the page itself: if this page were laid open. It appears that the scribe was asked to make a copy of one of Matthew's maps of England on a page that was still bound into the *Historia Anglorum*, as opposed to the normal process of manuscript production, where an entire bi-folio spread is written on or decorated and then all the separate sheets are assembled, stacked together and folded to form a manuscript's different choirs. If we understand the inscription in this sense, then we can almost hear the copyist complaining that he is not able to do a good job with the project because he is forced to work on a page that was already bound into a rather large and unwieldy book. Significantly, if we look to the right hand side of the map (Fig. 4.11), the southeast of England (the coastline which has the *least* in common with its prototypes), we see that the coastline is oddly straight and uniform—probably because the copyist was constrained to follow the construction of the codex on which he was working. More significantly, these

[68] "Si pagina pateretur, hec totalis insula longior esse deberet." Vaughan, *Matthew Paris*, 243. I wish to thank Nick Dobson for his kind assistance with this passage.

evidences allow us to construct a relative chronology and therefore a possible, if rudimentary, narrative that we can assign to these materials.

As prefaces to the *Historia Anglorum*, the fourth versions of both the itinerary and the map of England were probably destined for a royal audience. The Royal itinerary (Figs. 4.2 and 4.8), simpler, more beautiful, more straightforward, may date from as early as the late 1250's, or, if we accept it as a copy, could be as late as the early 1290s. Its reiteration of a Virgilian historiography, without regard for scriptural investment, its inscription of imperial ambitions in Sicily, and the proffering of Jerusalem as a prize of would-be crusades, all suggests the kind of benefits that would be valued by a king. Both Henry III (r. 1216–72) and his son Edward I (r. 1272–1307) had taken several vows to crusade and the itineraries' insistent progress to the holy city would have given either or both of them the opportunity to play out, at least imaginatively, that sacred, military act. At the same time, the itinerary brought before the acquisitive gaze of these kings the territorial expanses of Sicily and Apulia, visually expressing and at once satisfying, again imaginatively, these kings' imperial, expansionist drives. The itinerary apparently had become known to the King of England, and when it came time for Edward to martial evidence and resources in support of his claim to rule Scotland, the abbey of St. Albans, having always enjoyed royal favor, responded to the call perhaps with the production of the itinerary itself and probably the decision to send these pages to Westminster. At that moment, a last minute addition was made to the Royal itinerary in the form of the map of Britain (Fig. 4.11), a map which drew upon previous maps by Matthew Paris, but which specifically responded to the call of a royalist agenda. It dovetailed nicely with the imperialist contexts of the itinerary and made a fitting, if now local, response to the king's needs. The maps are now separated from their manuscript; and we cannot be certain of their fate. At some point, however, a scribe recorded the notion that these folios, suffused with geographic determinism and rich in royal ideology, concerned "the homage [due] from the regions of the Scots."

Without the ability to represent the world "as it was," medieval kings could demand representations of the world as they wanted it to be. And as the audience and users of such maps, they could make multiple uses of that representation—to conduct their own imagined crusade, to trace the origins of their empire back to the ennobling

Trojans, to re-affirm their imperial status in the "offer of Sicily," or to assert that empire in the control of Scotland and in the consolidation of an island's geography. More than reconstructing the specific circumstances of a given map's production, however, careful scrutiny of these pages for the ways they give different shapes to their geographies suggests a fluidity and malleability of medieval geography. Geographies, then, are so many shapings of identity, and maps a privileged means of expressing the values and intentions a culture selects as inherent elements of that identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

'*A MIRROUR OF MIS-HAPS,/ A MAPPE OF MISERIE*': DANGERS, STRANGERS, AND FRIENDS IN RENAISSANCE PILGRIMAGE

Wes Williams

Prologue: 'Questions of Travel'[1]

By way of prologue, two poems which ask questions of travel in two distinctly different ways: the first is a "Conflict," the second a "Dire"—a diary, or perhaps a dirge. Between them they represent two of the principle modes in which travel comes to be narrated in the European Renaissance, namely argument and witness. Focussing on representations of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, this chapter explores changes in the fortunes and shapes of pilgrim narratives between the mid-sixteenth and early seventeenth century, principally in English and in French. The dangers of the journey itself, the strangers encountered elsewhere, and the friends who accompany the pilgrim as he travels are part of what follows; but they, and the pilgrim's bearing witness to their shaping presence on his narrative, are only part of the story. For travel at this time of religious reform and counter-reform, of social unrest and indeed civil war, in which old friends turned into strangers, or worse, was for some a relief and escape from home, and for others the subject of intense debate, argument, and still further confessional conflict. Even within the restricted field of travel writing, pilgrimage found itself forced into argument: under pressure from the competing claims on its territory made by narratives of 'New World' travel and trade on the one hand, and by the development of discourses of secular wonder and institutionally sanctioned curiosity concerning the works of nature on the other, pilgrimage as a genre forged new alliances to counter the new

[1] The prologue title is taken from Elizabeth Bishop's poem, "Questions of Travel," in *Complete Poems* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), 93–4. For more on this, see epilogue, below.

dangers to its survival. In adapting the rules and conventions of the genre, pilgrim writers (which is to say both priests and lay pilgrims) renegotiated the terms in which their travels, and experience, could be told, assigned confessional value, and given collective meaning.

The dialog between the following two poems—an argumentative "Conflict" on the one hand, and an apparently autobiographical, confessional "Dire" on the other—serves, then, to introduce the themes of this chapter as it seeks to register and as it were to record the sound and the tone of pilgrim voices as they narrate, debate, and dramatize the sense, the value, and the costs of travel—and more specifically of the Jerusalem pilgrimage—across the European Renaissance. For of course pilgrimage survives, and survives well, late into the European Renaissance and beyond. But, as I shall try to show, the forms of access to otherness—to the sacred, to other cultures, and to others from within one's own culture—which pilgrimage had long fostered are changed in the process. And in this process of experimentation, changed along with the pilgrim ways, are the ways in which we move around the world, read its places and people, and recognise the mark of the sacred in ordinary language, everyday objects, and in ordinary place and time.

The first poem, "A Conflict, Betweene the Pilgrime and his Muse," is one of several collected in a strange slim volume of verse first published in Edinburgh, in 1618. Trading on the already considerable reputation of the traveler William Lithgow, in whose name and at whose expense the collection is published, and whom the title-page styles as "the Bonaventure of Europe, Asia, and Africa etc.," this volume, entitled *The Pilgrime's Farewell, to his Natiue Countrey of Scotland: Wherin is contained, in way of a Dialogue, the Joyes and Miseries of Peregrination*, advertises itself as being "worthie to be seen and read of all gallant spirits and pompe-expecting eyes," which is to say, armchair travelers, unable to undertake such journeys themselves in body, but, as readers, all agog, all eyes.[2] Yet the "Conflict," the first substantial

[2] William Lithgow, "A Conflict, Betweene the Pilgrime and his Muse," in *The Pilgrimes Farewell, To his Natiue Countrey of Scotland: Wherein is contained, in way of Dialogue, The Joyes and Miseries of Peregrination. With his Lamentado in his second Trauels, his Passionado on the Rhyne, Diuerse other Insertings, and Farewels, to Noble Personages, And, The Heremites Welcome to his Third Pilgrimage, &c. Worthie to be seene and read of all gallant Spirits, and Pompe-expecting eyes* (Edinburgh: Andro Hart, 1618). Some of Lithgow's other travel writings have been excerpted in Andrew Hadfield's useful recent anthology, *Amazons, Savages & Machiavels: Travel & Colonial Writing in English, 1550–1630* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). I have, for ease of reference, used modern editions

poem in the collection, seems initially to offer a counter-argument to the worth of spectacle and the pomp of peregrination which Lithgow's title-page presents, and which the shorter dedicatory pieces which precede it all pursue. For in it, the Pilgrime's "dying Muse" raises herself up from her death-bed, "halfe forc'd" and "bewailing," to engage in a long and animated dialog in which she argues against the ridiculous sad waste that is travel: "Muse: O restless man! Thy wandring I lament,/ Ah, ah, I mourn, thou canst not liue content" (ll.5–6). The Muse argues against "wandring," but the Pilgrime pleads that he can do no other: "Pilgrime: I know not how/to stay at home […]/ I find such loue in Strangers,/ Makes mee affect all Heathnicke tortring dangers" (ll.9–12). The coinage "Heathnicke" is no mistake; it is, rather, part of the poem's opening argument, serving to set the stage for the debate that is to follow. A new word, it redefines an old and enduring emotion: fear. One of many goods which the traveler has brought home for his readers, the word is an enticing, confabulated combination of 'heathen' and 'ethnic,' which tames, even as it names, its object: stranger danger.

The Muse, unimpressed, goes on to insist on the very real and material dangers of travel, reminding the Pilgrime that life on the road is anything but easy. Her response begins with another clichéd sigh—"But, O deare Soule, that life is full of cares"—before conjugating itself into a long line, busily punctuated with woe: "Great heat, great colde, great want, greate feare, greate paine" (ll.13–14). A similar structure animates the four lines that follow. A less than energetic characterisation of travel as, "A passionate toyle, with anxious despaires," only serves to prepare for an alliterative plethora, first of plosive 'p's, with the traveler beset by "plagues and pestes," then 'm's, as "murders growe amaine," and finally, in the Muse's dramatic conclusion, a characterisation of the Pilgrime's journey by way of a well-worn metaphor: "Thy Pilgrimage"—the word here is almost spat out—"Thy Pilgrimage a tragicke stadge of sorrow/ May spende at night, and nothing on the morrow" (ll.17–18).

The Muse, for all that she is exhausted, has not lost her memory. For the metaphor of the stage is one she had whispered into Lithgow's ear some years before, when, "in the Ile Nigroponti," in the Aegean,

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where they exist, and most of the English texts I refer to can be found on Early English Books Online. For those originally composed in other languages, translations, unless otherwise indicated are my own.

he had been "constrained by *Greekes* to keepe Centinell sixe dayes […] who then stood in feare of two Turkish Gallies."[3] The poem which he had then and there composed in his head to keep himself awake, and alive, begins as follows: "I Wander in exile,/ As though my Pilgrimage/ Were sweet Comedian Scoenes of loue/ Vpon a golden Stage" (ll.1–4). Forced to wait and watch—"A Cypher twixt the *Greekes* and *Turkes*"—Lithgow finds himself altogether unsure of the worth of the wandering that has brought him to this point. In images that anticipate those which his Muse will later use in her argument against him, he gives voice to what he fears will be his last words:

> Ah I, poore I, distressd,
> Oft changing to and fro,
> And forc'd to sing sad Obsequies
> Of this my Swan-like woe.
> A vagabonding Guest,
> Transported here and there,
> Led with the mercy-wanting windes
> Of feare, griefe, and despaire. (ll. 5–12)

Here, Lithgow's Muse, when inspiring him to sing this swan-song, recalls to his mind both his Classical and his Calvinist schooling, even as the pains of travel push him, at times, close to the edge of sense, and of poetic license:

> My destiny is such,
> Which doth predestine me
> To be a mirrour of mis-haps,
> A Mappe of Miserie.
> Extreamely doe I liue,
> Extreames are all my ioy
> I finde in deepe extreamities,
> Extreames extreame annoy.
> Now all alone I watch
> With *Argoes* eyes and wit. (ll.33–42)

The first four lines here make excellent use of that rhetoric of exemplarity which authorizes the narration of personal experience from

[3] William Lithgow, "A Dire made by the Pilgrime in the Ile Nigroponti, when hee was constrained by Greekes to keepe Centinell sixe dayes (according to the times) who then stood in feare of two Turkish Gallies," in *A most delectable and true discourse, of an admired and painefull peregrination from Scotland, to the most famous kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affricke* (London: Thomas Archer, 1616).

Augustine through Petrarch and beyond in the Christian tradition.[4] But as the next four lines make plain, there is also a good deal of classical rhetoric at play in this traveler's self-fashioning; a schoolbook exercise in the extremes of polyptoton prepares the way for the revelation, in the last two lines, of the secret of Lithgow's salvation: his gift to himself not only of 'wit,' but also of the watchful monster Argus's many eyes.[5] These are the qualities that function in the later "Conflict" as authoritative argument, proof of the worth of travel, and of the value of the lessons drawn from experience.

The terms of the argument in the "Conflict" are, then, derived from a long tradition, while also drawing on Lithgow's own earlier excursions into verse. Travel, says the Muse, brings only pain and danger; yes, says the Pilgrime, but that's not the end of the story: you've forgotten how to view the figure of Argus positively, forgotten the force of the claim on the title-page concerning "pompe-expecting eyes." Returning to the "Conflict" where we left off, we see that to his Muse's characterization of pilgrimage as a "tragicke stadge of sorrow," Lithgow's Pilgrime replies with an emphatic and unambiguous: "No." The pause, a displaced caesura at the start of the line, is a mark of his certainty: "No. Pilgrimage, the Well-spring is of Wit/ The clearest Fountaine whence graue Wisdome springs" (ll. 19–20). And as if to stress the worth of this pilgrim wit and wisdom, the word "Well-spring" itself generates a stream of "S" words—"the Seate of Knowledge, where Science still doth sit"—which then resolve themselves, by way of a transvaluation of values, into that "Wealth" which comes of being "riche in minde:" "A breathing Iudgement, deckt with prudent things/ This, thou call'st Sorrow, great Ioye is, and Pleasure:/ If I bee rich in Minde, no Wealth I measure" (ll. 22–24). The Pilgrime concedes that "No Heathnicke Partes can bee surueighed, but feare,/ and Dangers too" (ll. 32–3), but he does so only to argue the greater value of the wealth and wisdom thereby acquired:

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[4] For more on this tradition and its pilgrim afterlife, see Wes Williams, *Pilgrimage and Narrative in the French Renaissance*: *'The Undiscovered Country'* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 15–50; and Christiane Hippler, *Die Reise nach Jerusalem. Untersuchungen zu den Quellen, zum Inhalt und zur literarischen Struktur der Pilgerberichte des Spätmittelalters* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1987).

[5] For more on the mythological watchful figure of Argus see Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where, guarding the goddess Io, he is described as having "one hundred eyes / All watching and on duty round his head, / Save two which took in turn their sleep and rest" (I.625–7).

> But heere's a glorious gaine,
> I see those thinges, which others haue by ear:
> They reade, they heare, they dreame, reportes affect,
> But by experience, I trie the effect. (ll.33–36)

The Pilgrime may be particularly pleased with the "affect/effect" rhyme, its not-quite equivalence serving to mark the difference between himself and those who travel by reading, by report, and by hear-say. But the Muse is not quite finished with him yet; the "Conflict" is not quite over. For the claim to experience is not the trump card it might seem to us moderns. The early modern period saw a lively debate precisely about the term 'experience,' and about its relation to a discourse of profit, prudence, judgement, and gain. Think of Rosalind's taunt to Jacques, in William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, that having sold his lands to see those of other men, he had returned from his travels "with rich eyes and poor hands." Think, too, though, of Jacques' emphatic reply: "Yes, I have gained my experience." Rosalind, playing the part which the Muse plays in Lithgow's "Conflict," insists that the return on travel is less than worth the expense: "And your experience makes you sad. I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad—and to travel for it too."[6] As this essay will suggest, through discussion of a range of pilgrim writings from the early 1530s through to the first decades of the seventeenth century, the jury was still out across the early modern period, still waiting to decide about the relative worth of seeing as against hearing, of reading attentively about a place as against actually (or merely) having been there.

From early to late Renaissance, European travelers on the one hand, and stay-at-homes on the other were working from beyond and within the territory of pilgrimage, the better to extend its generic limits and bounds, and to argue from differing perspectives that theirs was the true and proper understanding of pilgrim terms. Alongside the many narratives of travel to the New World, and to lands and peoples beyond the borders of Christendom, the early modern period also saw the elaboration of imagined journeys in print: meditative descriptions of, for example, Jerusalem as it was in the time of Christ. Such pilgrim texts were for the most part com-

[6] William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, 4.1. 19–26, ed., Juliet Dusinberre (London: Arden Shakespeare [Thomson Learning], 2006), 288; see also the excellent notes ad loc., particularly that concerning the prophetic warnings from Essex to his cousin that "We Travellers shall bee made sport of in Comedies."

posed by people who had never traveled, intended for readers who believed that the true pilgrimage was that undertaken in the mind and that real change could only be experienced by staying still. Nicolas de Leuze's reworking of Jean Pascha's *La Peregrination Spirituelle vers la terre saincte*, a day-by-day, year-long guide to meditation in the form of a journey to Jerusalem, is just one of a whole host of pilgrim texts of the mid-to-late sixteenth century which seem to pre-empt Blaise Pascal's assertion a century later that "the sole cause of man's unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room."[7]

It is in the context of such arguments, and such texts—some of which we shall return to in more detail below—that Lithgow's Muse and Pilgrime engage in their "Conflict." The Muse trumpets the worth of "reading" and of the "Cabines" in which scholars can consult "Mappes, and Globes, find out/ The Wayes, the lengths, the breadths, the heights, the Pole" thanks to the technologies of the new geographical arts developed during the Renaissance. They can "wander all the Worlde about/ And lie in Bedde, and all thy sightes controle" (ll. 37–40). This is canny, for it makes of the traveler's most precious faculty, namely his sight, a mere commodity: "sightes," in the plural, each of them subject to the scholar's more measured art. "Controle" also has a financial sense in these lines, combining calculation with judgment, assessment, weighing and measuring: calling to account. And the Muse's closing couplet to this stage of the argument, in its formal balance, blinds the Pilgrime's "sight" with the scholar's science: "Though by experience, thou hast nat'rall sight,/ They haue by learning, supernat'rall light" (ll. 41–42). This is a serious counter-claim to a rhetoric of Argos-eyed experience, so the Pilgrime draws on all his rhetorical resources to reply. Exploiting a kind of chiasmus effect, in which the conjoined authorities of proverbial wisdom and internal rhyme echo across the final sestet, he closes his argument as to the worth of literal travel by dismissing those who see "all the World by Cairt," which is to say by reading and study alone:

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[7] Jean Pascha, *La Peregrination Spirituelle vers la terre saincte* (Louvain: Nicolas de Leuze, 1566); for more on these meditative pilgrimages, see my *Pilgrimage and Narrative*, 145–75; and Marie-Christine Gomez-Géraud, *Le Crépuscule du Grand Voyage: Les récits des pèlerins à Jérusalem (1458–1612)* (Paris: Champion, 1999), 301–466; Pascal's French reads, "Tout le malheur de l'homme vient de ce qu'il ne sait pas demeurer en repos dans une chambre." We return to this in the epilogue, below.

> Thou knowst Muse, I had rather see one Land,
> Be true eye-sight, than all the Worlde by Cairt:
> Two Birdes in flight, and one fast in mine hand,
> Which of them both, belonges most to my pairt:
> One eye-witnesse is more, than ten which heare,
> I dare affirme the Trueth when they forbeare. (ll.43–48)

Less, here, is more, and to this the Muse can only reply: "Heere thou prevailst" (l.49). All that is left for the Muse to do—and she does it for a good few pages yet—is remind the Pilgrime of the many dangers, toils and fears, from wild beasts to thieves, and from the Inquisition to sunburn, that he will encounter in search of this wealth he calls "eye-witness experience," or "Trueth." But the Pilgrime, undaunted, insists that the argument in favour of experience, when expressed in terms of the worth of eye-witness testimony over that of hearsay, is, finally unimpeachable. And he is not alone in so doing. For the literature of early modern Europe is a store-house or treasure trove of tales of danger survived, of encounters between pilgrim travelers whom Rabelais's Panurge terms "lovers of peregrinity, whose too much curiosity has thrown them upon adventures," and others who seek to make those pilgrims into human, bacon-basted kebabs, attack them on the desert road, or throw them into prison, or slavery, or worse. Danger, undergone but survived, returns again and again, both as narrative incident, and *as argument* within pilgrim texts: both against the mere book-learning of stay-at-home readers, and in favour of the fruit of such "experience" as can be retailed as pleasure-producing wit and wisdom for readers' "pompe-expecting eyes."[8]

The Friend's Testament

> I know the Worlde-wide fields my Lodging is,
> And venemous thinges, attende my fearful sleepe.[9]

Yet Lithgow's Muse is not wrong; "experience" was bought, or gained, often, at the cost of the pilgrim traveler's own life. There survive very few accounts written by Jerusalem pilgrims who died

[8] For more on the Rabelaisian aspects of this story, see my "'Out of the frying pan'…," in *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, eds., R.J.W. Evans and Alexander Marr (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 21–42.

[9] Lithgow, "Conflict," ll.55–6.

on the journey. Few exist in the archives, and fewer still were published. But there are some, and turning to one of them, we find, late in August 1532, Denis Possot writing, in the evening, as usual, in his journal. He is awaiting the departure of the pilgrim ship, anchored off the coast of Candia, on the island of Crete; it is the journey home, the winds are finally favourable, but the pilgrim, like others in his company, is unwell: "The day after arriving [in Candia] six of us fell ill, and there are only ten of us in the group. On the Wednesday, after lunch, my ribs seemed painful, and my kidneys, too, a little, and my heart."[10] Written day by day—Possot made his journey, he tells us, "notebook always in hand" (*ayant toujours la tablette en main*)—his *Most-ample and Fulsome description of the Journey to the Holy Land* (*Tresample et habondante description du voyaige de la Terre Saincte*) is the only French Renaissance narrative of the Jerusalem pilgrimage published in the form and structure of a journal, or diary. The narrative recording the details of his journey from when he left home some five months earlier, on Monday March 11, 1532, is animated by the incidents and accidents of the pilgrim road. Not prolix, nor preaching the worth of singular "eye-witness experience" like Lithgow, Possot records, rather, the common tales, reports, and rumours shared among those he encounters on his pilgrimage, especially those passed on by other travelers, other lay pilgrims on the Jerusalem road.

Not far from Ferrara, for instance, on April 8, Possot and his companions meet "a number of pilgrims returning from Our Lady of Loreto [the Marian shrine near Ancona, also known as the 'Santa Casa'], who told us that the Turk had not taken the place, even though there were rumours to that effect."[11] Motivated by the first person plural—"we" do most of the things in this text—Possot's narrative takes the reader through many dangers and difficulties: before "we" arrived at Jaffa on June 27, made the hazardous journey overland to Jerusalem (arriving with great joy on July 2), and visited the sites in and around the holy city for a good twelve days, before leaving for home on July the 15th. At Jaffa, "we" negotiated terms for the passage first to Cyprus and then to Candia, from where another boat would take "us" home. While waiting, a month later,

[10] Denis Possot, *Voyage de la Terre sainte, composé par Denis Possot et achevé par Charles Philippe [1532]*, ed., Charles Schefer (Paris: E. Leroux, 1890), 193.

[11] Possot, *Voyage*, 69.

for the departure of the pilgrim galley from Candia, as noted above, six of "us" fell ill. It is the day after this report that Possot marks, unusually, his account with the first person singular: "On the Friday, I felt, towards evening, a good deal of pain; and at night, from around the time I woke up, I began to feel a pain in my kidneys, and my face was covered in pustulent sores, and then my whole body."[12]

These are his last recorded words. A few days later, the ship sets sail. Four of his fellow pilgrims stay with him on Candia, since they too are unable to travel further; but the others leave him on his death-bed, hoping to escape the sickness and continue the journey home. A manuscript account by one of his fellow pilgrims, Jehan Gachi, tell us that Denis Possot was the last of the pilgrims to die; on September 17 he briefly regained consciousness for a few hours, but then died and was buried the next day in the Franciscan cemetery on Crete.[13] Within Possot's own account, neither "we" nor "I" had been able to tell their story since that Friday a good month before; and so the text, the day-by-day narrative of the pilgrimage, is, at that point, interrupted. But it does not in fact end. For on the very same page on which Possot's last written words are printed, we find a new, brief, preface of sorts, a paragraph, separated from the rest of the text, and headed: "To the Reader." This unexpected prefatory paragraph, located as it is mid-narrative, addresses itself to the "friend and reader" (*amy lecteur*), and records Possot's transferral of the goods, or the gift, which was his manuscript, to one Charles Philippe:

> likewise on this selfsame pilgrimage, and who voluntarily, indeed heartily, resolved to complete the account according to what remained of the road to be taken, such that nothing of what belongs in the description of such a journey should be omitted. As you can see in what follows by the testimony of the above.

If, in reading Possot, like Lithgow, or like that other Renaissance traveler whose journal was posthumously published, Michel de Montaigne, to whom we shall return below, we read a text composed of several voices, it is not because Possot is in dialog with his Muse or his secretary, but because after his death someone else speaks for him: on his terms, which is to say in the style and manner in which

[12] Ibid., 193.

[13] For more on Jehan Gachi (whose ms. I have not been able to read), see Schefer's introduction to Possot's, *Voyage*, x-xii.

he himself had composed his account thus far, but also in his place, in his stead. From August 21, 1532 onwards, the voice of another, the friend, Charles Philippe, takes up the narrative, and completes the pilgrimage account, as promised. From here on, it is this other who writes "I," who insists indeed in so doing, so that first "I," and then "we," can continue to tell the story:

> On departure from Candia, therefore, and in the absence of the aforementioned Denis Possot, who had written and composed up until this point all that has been noted thus far in this book, I, though unworthy [*moy indigne*] have made and composed in writing the remainder of the present/ book, as closely as has been possible to his intentions, as you will be able to see in what follows.[14]

"*Moy indigne*," a new first person singular signs himself in, so as to continue the account; signs in, that is, as a mark of friendship, of intimacy with his fellow-traveler. Philippe qualifies himself as being "likewise on the selfsame pilgrimage." The first person singular here reads, then, as an index not of hubris, nor self-serving authority, but as a form of witness on behalf of the other: a mark of textual, indeed grammatical, solidarity with the dead friend (and with the genre of pilgrimage), for whom, and through whom, he now speaks to us "friend[s] and reader[s]," of "what remained of the road to be taken."[15] Bringing the initial pilgrim-narrator's account to an end, the text introduces us to another, to the friend, who had not been able to save Possot's life, but who had completed the pilgrimage narrative for him, had brought the pilgrim text home to France, and had published it, without (so far as we can tell) changing a thing, except, perhaps, retrospectively integrating himself into the action and the verbs, conjugated in the first person plural, which had structured the narrative voyage until the moment at which the friend had died, and from that point, continuing the narrative in the first person. It is a first person which is here singular, but which will return, in the subsequent paragraph to the accustomed plural. Philippe speaks

[14] Ibid., 194–5.

[15] For more on the relation between rhetorics of friendship and the development of first person singular narrative forms in early modern French writing, see Terence Cave, "Fragments d'un moi futur: de Pascal à Montaigne," in *Pré-Histoires: Textes troublés au seuil de la modernité* (Geneva: Droz, 1999), 111–27. See also, for an analysis of genre and social context in early modern pilgrimage writing, Claudia Zrenner, *Die Berichte der europäischen Jerusalempilger (1475–1500). Ein literarischer Vergleich im historischen Kontext* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1980).

as if he is following the laws of genre, as well as those of friendship beyond illness and death, and there is no reason to doubt his good faith. But in fact the text, as published, breaks those very laws of genre, since the retrospective self-censorship which normally preceded publication of such a journal could not take place here. The constraining conventions of genre did not do their work in Possot's case as he wrote of his singular pain in his final illness; and Philippe, in following the narrative model set by his friend's notes, is not inclined to do the law's work in his stead, neither when it comes to continuing the narrative, nor when it comes to publication of their now joint account. It is thus because he died on the journey home, because he never made it back to France, and crucially also because his friend continued his first person account, before himself supervising its editing, and its printing, that Denis Possot speaks to us in his singular voice, in the form of a journal, of the experience of that pilgrimage which led him to the cemetery in Crete.

The Grammar of Testimony

Possot and Philippe's narrative is all the more remarkable, because Renaissance pilgrims rarely write in the first person singular, about things which they have done on their own. That Lithgow's Pilgrime represents himself in dialog with his Muse is a sign of the fact that he set out from home—unusually—on his own. Almost all the other Renaissance pilgrims whose texts have survived, and whose narratives were published, when they come to tell of their experience in print, do so in sentences scrupulously plural in structure, communitarian in their very grammar. This is in part a function of the conditions of travel: most early modern pilgrims, whether they were traveling to Jerusalem or to more local shrines, traveled in company. But it is also, as the following lines from a catechistic dialog for the instruction of pilgrims written by the Low Countries priest Jean Halin make clear, a function of a particular understanding of pilgrim identity:

> He should set aside all other ends, since it is wrong to set out on pilgrimage with the principle aim of messing around, begging favours, and gossiping [*brinber ou camander*], and even more wrong to aim to pass the time pleasurably, in loose or dissolute behaviour [*folastrer et faire dissolutions*]. Leaving home and returning safely, praying to God all the while, keeping silent on the road, or praying and meditating, engaging

> in honest conversation, singing spiritual songs, and enduring with patience the difficulties of the journey, while supporting and helping, consoling and sustaining each other in charity and in concord, and so proving an example to all. These, in short, are the duties of the good pilgrim.[16]

To be a pilgrim is to be not so much a person as a character, a representative, an example. A contemporary instance of an ancient metaphor, proving with both his journey and his narrative the continuing validity of the genre, the pilgrim tells his story in necessarily imitative, borrowed terms, rather than in ways which stress the novelty or particularity of his own experience.

To be a Christian pilgrim, furthermore, is to follow Paul's example in the letter to the Hebrews, avowing citizenship of "another country" and adopting a liminal position not just for the length of the journey, but throughout the pilgrimage of life. Having "no abiding city," the pilgrim strictly "belongs" neither at home, nor in Jerusalem. When Jean du Blioul, another priestly defender of pilgrimage at the turn of the seventeenth century, asks of his vernacular readers a question concerning the co-ordinates of pilgrimage, he also gives them the answer, supporting his argument with the untranslated authority of the Latin Bible:

> Are not good and faithful Christians strangers and pilgrims in this world? *Nostra conversatio in coelis est* [*Philip. 3, notes the margin*]. These are the words of St. Paul, and he also says elsewhere: *Non habemus hic manentem civitatem, sed futuram inquirimus* [*Hebr. 13*]. And what is more, The Angel of God tells us: *Vae habitantibus in terra* [*Rev .8*]. since the Lord/ God will curse all those men and women, who, while living in this world, devote themselves to it with their hearts and with affection.[17]

But there is also a more specifically narrative sense in which Renaissance pilgrims knew themselves to have only temporary identities, and guarded ones at that; for almost none of the travelers who published accounts of their Jerusalem journeys were writers by profession, and, at least when they brought their texts into print, they adhered closely to the rules of what we might call the early modern

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[16] Jean Halin, *Brief dialogue d'un homme passant son chemin, & d'un honeste et scauant Prestre qui conduit des pelerins à Maestrecht, auquel est monstré le proffit des Pelerinages, et la maniere de bien les faire* (Liège: C. Ouverx, 1623), f. 3r.

[17] Jean du Blioul, *Le Voyage de Hierusalem et pelerinage des lieux saincts* (Besançon: Nicolas de Moingesse, 1602), 4–5.

grammar of pilgrim community. Some, such as the priests, du Blioul and Halin—anticipating the likes of Lithgow—were effectively polemicists by profession, and saw their task as reinforcing adherence to the rules, particularly those concerning narrative and its relation to curiosity conjugated in the first person singular. "It is only vain curiosity," writes Luis de Granada, in his 1575 guide for pilgrims to Loreto, "which takes us to new lands to see new peoples, and to feast our eyes on the variety of creation, so as to boast, after the event, of having seen this or that rare or singular thing."[18] As we shall see in more detail below, the guide-book becomes the genre of choice for priestly pilgrims of the counter-Reform, as they make of their journeys exemplary performances of the faith, in defense of pilgrimage and against its Reformist detractors. And yet very few lay Jerusalem pilgrims had ever committed themselves to paper, let alone print, before; nor did so again. In speaking of such pilgrim narrators developing 'a voice,' then, or of 'characters' in their texts, we are speaking about temporary, occasional, linguistic shapes and costumes taken on, or experimented with, by people who, in many cases, do not otherwise appear to have been in the habit of writing, let alone narrating their own experience of travel. The real-life counterparts of Lithgow's Pilgrime are for the most part altogether less prolix than the self-styled "Bonaventure of Europe, Asia, and Africa etc." Their narratives are, rather, sparse in circumstantial detail, and the descriptions they leave behind of the places they visit are composed in terms borrowed from, authorized, and thus sanctified, either by their precursors, or by the guides who lead them around the sites, shaping the memories they record in ways at once orthodox and new.

We know still less about the readers of pilgrimage accounts, or the uses to which their accounts were put, except in so far as they figure as part of another traveler's text: several non-pilgrims mention those who have traveled before them, and whose pilgrim texts they have read, by way of model, guide, consolation or negative example.[19] And while pilgrims themselves do occasionally address the question

[18] Luis de Granada, *Istruttione de' Peregrini, che vanno all Madonna di Loreto* (Macerata: Sebastiano Martellini, 1575), 13.

[19] For more on this and on the relation between the writings of French pilgrims and other travelers due East, see Gomez-Géraud, *Le Crépuscule*, 109–559, and the fine study by Frédéric Tinguely, *L'Écriture du Levant à la Renaissance: Enquête sur les voyageurs français dans l'empire de Soliman le Magnifique (*Geneva: Droz, 2000).

of why they write, they do so, more often than not, in order to protest that they have published their account only in response to repeated requests from friends, or patrons, or as part of that same vow which led to the journey being undertaken. This last point is crucial, since the emphasis on mediation, polemic, confessional argument, and the emergence of singular forms of subjectivity in our readings of these texts should not so much obscure as clarify the central assertion of early modern pilgrimage writing: that traveling, listening to others' stories, writing one's own, and then reading still more, are part of one and the same collective continuum.

That pilgrims understood their own travels as exemplary, undertaken on behalf of others as well for their own sakes and salvation, is clear from the account of one Antoine Regnaut, a French lay pilgrim, whose narrative of the Jerusalem pilgrimage undertaken in 1549, places particular emphasis on the collective, rather than personal value of his experience. Having returned home safely, and finally shepherded his text into print, years later, Regnaut concludes his preface with the following disclaimer:

> Since, Sir, I know you to be a Catholic, a true Israelite, and without any fraud a Christian through and through, loving all that is holy and wholesome, simple and without embellishment, misuse, falseness, nor any kind of double meaning, I, who write simply, truthfully, and purely of what I have seen, or noticed, have been so bold as to offer you this as a small present, which though it is less rich in price than pearls of the Orient, nonetheless […][20]

And so he continues in defense of the gift of his narrative to his patron. For all that he uses the first person singular in his preface, Regnaut's account is defensive, rather than hubristic or self-serving, in tone. He is painfully aware that readers expect something other than old-fangled pilgrim-speak from travel narratives these days: exotic treasures, similar perhaps to those collected by contemporaneous French explorers such as Jacques Cartier in Canada, and André Thevet in Brazil, or indeed Pantagruel and his crew as they wander through the world uncovered in Rabelais's *Quart Livre*. As Rabelais's travelers and their less fictional counterparts were aware, readers back home now wanted "divers pictures, tapestries,

[20] Antoine Regnaut, *Discours du Voyage d'outremer au sainct sepulchre* (Paris: auz fauxbourgs Sainct Jacques a lenseigne de la croix de Hierusalem, 1573), f. a3r.

animals, fish, birds and other *exotic and foreign goods*" (*marchandises exotiques et peregrines*).[21]

Nor, as Regnaut's reference to "pearls of the Orient" makes clear, is it only due west that writers were forging new ways of telling their journeys, and in doing so suggesting new forms of profit to be had from their texts. Renaissance travelers to the Near East were also increasingly concerned to establish ways of writing which were not bound by the conventions of inherited sacred forms; and to find such ways even when writing about that territory which lies at the heart of pilgrimage. The botanist Pierre Belon, for instance, is just one of several mid- to late-sixteenth-century French travelers who pass through Palestine in the course of a larger journey, rather than heading for Jerusalem and Sinai and home again. When published, his travels become the *Observations of several singularities and memorable things, found in Greece, Asia, Judea, Egypt, Arabia and other countries […]* (Paris, 1553). In admitting of Eastern destinations other than Jerusalem, Belon's journey abjures its kinship to pilgrimage; in writing of places and things which bear no relation to the scriptures, his text transgresses the boundaries of pilgrimage discourse. The reader of his *Observations* is thus offered not the unique experience of a glimpse of the sacred, but rather the purview of that "wondrous variety of things" (*l'esmerveillable varieté des choses*) which goes to make up the new world still waiting to be found due East.[22]

Regnaut reacts to such displacement of the symbolic centrality of Jerusalem to travels due East by seeming to compare his book unfavourably with those of travelers who bring home objects of wonder or price, arguing that the pilgrim's task is simply to record the impress of God on the world. Thus, when he comes to produce his eleven-point guide for Jerusalem pilgrims who may wish to take to the roads following his example, he deals, in the first of his *Instructions*, not with practical necessities, nor with the dangers of the journey itself, but rather with the spiritual danger of curiosity, and with the temptations

[21] François Rabelais, *Le Quart Livre* [1548/1552], ed., Gérard Defaux (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1994), 187, emphasis added. For more on the 'marchandises peregrines' of Rabelais's text, see my *Pilgrimage and Narrative*, 278–88.

[22] Pierre Belon, *Les Observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grece, Asie, Judée, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays estranges, redigées en trois livres* (Paris: Gilles Corrozet, 1553). For more on the extraordinary success of this text see Alexandra Merle's recent edition, *Les Observations de Pierre Belon du Mans* (Paris: Editions Chandeigne, 2001).

of narrative desire. Pilgrims must, he says, steer clear of the new fashion for first person singular narration from which travelers working in other genres these days too often suffer. If they do leave home, pilgrims should do so:

> with the intention of going to see and to visit with great floods of tears those Holy Places which God has elected and chosen in this world for the redemption of human kind, and not with the intention of seeing the world, or so as to exult in saying 'I've been in such and such a place, I've seen this or that thing' and so on, gaining in the process estimation in the world, as some do. For anyone who does so, as our Lord says in the Gospels, *Receperunt mercedem suam* [will have long since received their reward].[23]

Rather than display signs of novel, personal experience in the course of his narrative, the pilgrim should revel, Regnaut suggests, in ancient, sanctioned, ways of speaking. Unlike the accounts of other travelers—texts spiced with foreign words, or fictional narratives emblazoned with impossible paintings hanging on non-existent walls such as those found in Rabelais's chronicles—Regnaut's exemplary pilgrim discourse is, he argues, " not decorated with fine paintings, nor enriched with sweetly ornamental or affected language."[24] The last two adjectives here are effectively synonyms: that which is not essential, which is to say recuperable to a devotional reading, anything, in other words, which is mere "ornament," is by necessity also "affected." Regnaut's apparent vulnerability, the apparently concessive confession that his is the simplest and least showy of travel narratives the reader is likely to encounter, is in truth argument, in the service of a cause: that of strengthening the claims of faithful pilgrim style. His professed rhetorical inadequacy, like the avoidance of the narration of subjective experience so prominently displayed in the preface, guarantees what he terms the "truth of things" as he narrates them. To be an exemplary pilgrim is, for Regnaut as for others within the early modern pilgrim community, to refuse to conjugate one's travels according to the fashionable grammar of subjective experience.[25]

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[23] Regnaut, *Discours*, 1.

[24] Ibid., f. a2r.

[25] For differing senses of non-pilgrim travels due East in this period, see Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 15–161; Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 26–51; Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums,*

These are not altogether new arguments. Indeed it is their lack of novelty that assures their value to the pilgrim in so far as he proves to be part of a long and still living tradition. But it is clear that the pilgrim text defines itself, as Renaissance gives way to Reform and counter-Reform, increasingly by way of difference; difference that is, less from those of other faiths and cultures the pilgrim meets on the way to Jerusalem, and more from those other kinds of traveler whom his own internally divided culture is calling out on to the road, into print, and into prominence. Of course it is also true that in redescribing the pilgrim's stylistic poverty as infinitely precious, Regnaut is, indirectly, arguing the worth of personal witness, and of the travel account as autopsy; which is to say that he is arguing in common with travelers to the New World, such as the Protestant Jean de Léry, who writes of his travels to Brazil. Regnaut assures his readers that his narrative had been composed in the promised land itself, and that he has written of things "in the order in which they happened, without embellishing, or adding, or subtracting anything from the journey itself."[26] Léry writes in almost identical terms, stressing that his text, written *in situ* in Brazilwood ink, has been unchanged since his return. Indeed even as he argues for the necessity of the occasional use of the first person singular, Léry acknowledges the extent to which his saying "I" constitutes a potentially objectionable departure from sacred convention, and one which all too often bears witness less to the truth of things seen, as to travelers' common license to tell tall tales.

> If someone finds it ill that hereafter, when I speak of savage customs, I often use this kind of expression—'I saw,' 'I found,' 'this happened to me' and so on (as if I wanted to show myself off)—I reply that [...] the things put forth by me in this history are not only true, but also, since they have been hidden to those who lived before our age, worthy of wonder.[27]

Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 155–93.

[26] Regnaut, f. a2r.

[27] Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Brésil, 1578*, ed., F. Lestringant (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1994), 98; *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Containing the Navigation and the Remarkable Things seen by the Author [...] Strange Ways of Life of the American Savages [...] the Description of various Animals, Trees, Plants and Other Singular Things Completely Unknown over Here*, trans., J. Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 34. For inroads into early modern European New World writing, see Wolfgang Neuber, *Fremde Welt im europäischen Horizont: Zur Topik der deutschen Amerika-Reiseberichte der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1991); Michael Harbsmeier,

The differences in grammatical convention between our texts are felt as all the more acute since each representative of the various confessional groups in conflict across the early modern period is arguing from within—and for ownership of—the same textual territory. From Possot and Regnaut to Léry and Lithgow, from Jerusalem to the New World, from Catholic to Calvinist; all these travelers, pilgrims and missionaries claim, from different positions across the confessional divides, that their texts alone tell the truth of travel. Regnaut's account, he claims, has, like Possot and Philippe's, and like that of Jean de Léry, made its journey from 'Elsewhere' home to France, with the analogous trajectory from manuscript to print, essentially unaltered; thus, akin to a relic, the text carries with it the charge of the power of the (sacred) location in whose substance it participates. What is true of the Protestant account of "France Antarctique"—the early modern French name for what we now call Brazil—is also true of the Catholic accounts of Palestine: for all are written in the terms of exemplary authorship, terms which derive their force from the grammar of (pilgrim) community. The programmatic absence of retrospective authorial intervention, a kind of exemplary narrative ascesis, demonstrates, through studied self-denial of the rhetoric of secular wonder, as of the narration of non-devotional detail, the (pilgrim) traveler's sense of devotion to, and community with his companions, his readers.

The Return of Experience

> With his help I composed this present journey in writing, for without him, I would not have perfectly understood all the mysteries that were accomplished in those places to which we were led. But he carried his Bible with him at all times, and at each and every place we would compare what we were seeing with what we were reading.[28]
>
> Grefin Affagart, *Relation de Terre sainte* (1533–34)

The argument concerning the forms and the terms of personal experience is central to the early modern period. It informs fields as

Wilde Völkerkunde: Andere Welten in deutschen Reiseberichten der frühen Neuzeit (Frankfurt: Campus, 1994); and Franz Obermeier, *Brasilien in Illustrationen des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Vervuert, 2000).

[28] Grefin Affagart, *Relation de Terre sainte (1533–1534)*, ed., J. Chavanon (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1902), 63.

apparently diverse as medicine and prayer, as reading the Bible and shopping for the best deal on the package tour from Venice to Jaffa and back. For the priests of the counter-Reform, who sought to reanimate the practice of the Jerusalem pilgrimage in the first years of the seventeenth century, to rescue it from its critics, and who, following Regnaut's example, accompanied their own accounts with *Guides* or *Instructions* on how to perform the journey, one thing above all was clear: there was an urgent need to define the subjectivity of the true Christian pilgrim. It was in the nature of Renaissance argument that such writers understood subjectivity to be a question both of action and of speech: to be a pilgrim was to do certain things, perform certain actions, and to speak—or not speak—in certain ways. Loys Balourdet, a priest who made the journey in 1588–89, echoes, almost verbatim, Regnaut's advice concerning not speaking in the first person about one's experiences. The preface to his *Guide to the Roads on the Jerusalem Journey* concludes with the now familiar argument that those pilgrims who travel in order to then be able to speak, or write "in exaltation of saying 'I have seen this or that thing' have already long since received their payment and reward." [29]

The lexicon of reward, payment, and return on costly experience underscored Rosalind's retort, in *As You Like It*, to her traveling friend, Jacques. It was the point of the conflict between Lithgow's Pilgrime and his Muse; and it is an argument about which one of the most singular and persuasive writers of the French Renaissance, Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592), also has much to say. Although a traveler himself, and a pilgrim—both to Rome, and to Loreto—Montaigne, in the *Essais*, bears witness to a certain degree of scepticism about the new craze for first-person travel narratives, and the developing belief that border-crossing and genre-bending went hand in hand. Indeed, even as he famously advertises the worth of travel in essays such as "Of the education of children," there arguing the importance of "an honest curiosity to inquire into all things," Montaigne also reacts against the errors and excesses contained in the many first-person accounts on the colonial and generic market.[30]

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[29] Loys Balourdet, *La Guide des chemins pour le voyage de Jérusalem* (Chaalons: C. Guyot, 1601), f. Eiir.

[30] Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Works*, trans., Donald Frame (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1957), 115. The experiment that is the *Essais* occupied Montaigne for the last twenty or so years of his life, from the book's conception in the

Where, for instance, the poet Ronsard lauds the much-traveled (and much-published) French Cosmographer Royal, André Thevet, for his first person narratives, for his voluminous tomes, and for venturing beyond the bournes of ancient example, Montaigne reads in Thevet and his kind only the signs of seriously bad times. "Compared to you, that Greek [Ulysses] in ten years saw nothing," Ronsard crows, addressing in Thevet the French traveler who is, heroically, not afraid to tell, and to write, his own, singular story:

> What is more, you have over him the dual advantage
> Of seeing more than him, and of making your voyage
> Your own, in your own hand; he never owned his. [31]

Thevet's fame spread abroad, and Ronsard was just one of the many poets who gathered, in the preface to Thevet's *Cosmographie Universelle* (1575), to sing the praises, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, of this modern Odysseus and Homer rolled into one, who brought "the spoils of the universe captive" home to France.[32] But the Montaigne of the essay "On Vanity" reads the situation differently: "Scribbling seems to be symptomatic of an unruly age. When did we write so much as since our dissensions [the Civil Wars] began? And when did the Romans write so much as just before their collapse?" His remedy is not competition with other would-be imperial powers, but rather restriction of the right to roam, especially discursively: "There should be some legal restraint aimed against inept and useless writers, as there is against vagabonds and loafers. Then both myself and a hundred others would be banished from the hands of our people. I'm not joking" (*Ce n'est pas mocquerie*).[33] This is, in one of the oldest and most persistent of moral tropes, deployed, as we saw above, by

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early 1570s, through to publication of the first two volumes in 1580, followed by a third in 1588. He was in the process of revising all three books when he died in 1592.

[31] André Thevet, *La Cosmographie universelle* (Paris: Pierre L'Huillier and Guillaume Chaudiere, 1575) II, liminary pages; the same point is made by Ronsard's fellow Pléaide-poet, Jean Antoine de Baif, in one of the liminary poems to the first volume of the *Cosmographie Universelle,* I. f. eiijr.

[32] *Cosmographie Universelle*, II, f. eijv. Indispensable reading on Thevet are Frank Lestringant's two studies, *André Thevet: Cosmographe des derniers Valois* (Geneva: Droz, 1991); and *Le Huguenot et le Sauvage: L'Amérique et la controverse coloniale en France, au temps des guerres de Religion* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1990). See also his excellent introduction to this field: *Mapping the Renaissance World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[33] Montaigne, *Complete Works*, 722. I have occasionally altered the English where my reading of the French differs from Frame's.

Lithgow's Muse, to equate writing with "wand'ring," and with error, and the writer—and here Montaigne includes himself in the charge—with the vagabond.

In the essay "Of Cannibals," Montaigne sharpens the contextual focus still further, and makes the terms of the debate clearer still, "What we need are topographers, who would each make a detailed and particular account [*narration particulière*] of the places they have actually been to." With André Thevet clearly in mind, he continues, grumbling, "But because they have the advantage of having visited Palestine they imagine this means they enjoy the rights [*jouir du privilège*] to telling tales about the rest of the world."[34] The stress here is both on narrative decorum and on the author's rights to enjoy the benefits of ownership of his own discourse. "*Jouir*" and "*privilège*" carry legal significance in his text, underscoring the rights attaching to the signature, the proper name authorizing the account. Montaigne's charge against Thevet and his kind is both a legal complaint concerning intellectual property in the new age of publishing, and a more old-fangled pilgrim's argument about the inflated return some authors claim on their investment in that most unstable of commodities: 'experience.'[35]

None of this means of course that Montaigne was against travel, or even travel writing. Indeed the (posthumously published) *Journal* of his journey to Italy has him wishing that he had—as well as bringing along his own cook and valet—packed in his case a copy of one of "those books that might have informed him about the rare and remarkable things in each place."[36] But it is the "in each place" that is important here. For the one writer named as having produced such a book worth carrying along on a journey is André Thevet's precursor and rival, Sebastian Münster, whose politics, religion and, most crucially for Montaigne, rhetorical method, were some way from that of the French Cosmographer Royal. For Münster's account, his *Cosmographia Universalis*, is less his arrogant own, still less that of his nation, than self-consciously and proudly a compendium of the writings of those who have sent him what Montaigne might have

[34] Montaigne, *Complete Works*, 152.

[35] For more on Montaigne on pilgrimage, see my "'Rubbing up against others:' Montaigne on pilgrimage," in *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel*, eds., J. Elsner and J.P. Rubiés (London: Reaktion Press, 1999), 101–23.

[36] Montaigne, *Complete Works*, 892.

called their own "*narrations particulières*," from their own homes and areas of expertise within the republic of letters.[37]

Montaigne's argument against first person travel narratives authorized by a pretense at ubiquity is, in all but name, a pilgrim argument. For as Regnaut had made clear, pilgrimage is a place governed by laws at once literal and discursive. The pilgrim laws against the "wand'ring" of body and mind regulate the circulation of sacred energy, which bear on the construction of the texts themselves, and maintain the force of the generic claims of pilgrimage narrative, midway between devotional imitative exercise and personal record of lived experience. This is the force of the words noted in the manuscript account by the early Renaissance pilgrim, Greffin Affagart, cited in epigraph to this section. He records how much he owes to the companion with whom he traveled, and who made collective, devotional sense of the places, at once geographical and scriptural, which the pilgrims visited while in the Holy Land, and in so doing authorizes the worth of his own account. For pilgrim rhetorics of sacred presence to operate successfully, there must—as Lithgow's Muse, Philippe, Regnaut, Léry, Affagart, and Montaigne in their different ways suggest—be bounds set to the textual territory through which readers, like pilgrims before them, move.

One of the most adamant of the narrative legislators of the counter- or Catholic-Reform who sought to police pilgrim subjectivity, to order pilgrim narratives, to police the borders of pilgrim territory, and to assert the *difference* of pilgrimage from forms of secular travel is the priest and pilgrim, Henri de Castela. His 1604 *Guide and handbook for those wishing to undertake the Holy Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, written in the wake of the texts of both Regnaut and Balourdet discussed above, was published separately from, and in cheaper format than his own, long, prolix and complex account of the 1600 Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome, Jerusalem, and back.[38] That *Guide* marks a defining moment in the history of Renaissance pilgrimage writing, both in its relations to curiosity and danger, and in its polemical account

[37] Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographia Universalis* (Basel: H. Petri, 1550); this richly illustrated encyclopaedic cosmography, first published in German in 1544, was a hugely influential description of the world, and an international publishing success from the 1550s to the late 1570s. It is known that Montaigne owned a copy.

[38] Henri de Castela, *La Guide et adresse pour ceux qui veulent faire le S. Voyage de Hierusalem* (Paris: Laurent Sonnius, 1604); see also his *Le Sainct Voyage de Hierusalem et Mont Sinay* (Bordeaux: P.A. du Brel, 1603).

of the value of the new, secular forms of travel which were both becoming practically possible, and, crucially, developing theoretical validity within Europe. As Joan-Pau Rubiés and others gathered in this volume have shown, the sixteenth century scholars Theodor Zwinger, Hieronymous Turler and Justus Lipsius were all training the young noblemen of the Protestant north in ways of seeing and being on the road which bore no stated relationship to pilgrimage, indeed to scripture at all.[39] To counter this, Castela presents a compendium of pilgrim advice, gleaned from those of earlier writers in Greek, Latin, French and Italian, reaching as far back as Gregory of Nyssa, whose letter on pilgrimage gave rise to furious and heated debate across the period. In his own *Guide*, and making a last-gasp effort to lay exclusive pilgrim rights to the territory of travel to Jerusalem, Castela urges the pilgrim, as generations had before him, to ensure that he is "not driven by vain and vicious curiosity;" he (for it is always he) must ensure that he is aware that "God does not inspire us to undertake the Holy Pilgrimage so that we can prattle and boast afterwards about having seen this or that rare or singular thing."[40] Castela's concern is with what he terms "*la personne chrestienne*," which is to say Christian character. And so, unlike those of other contemporary travelers, his *Guide* does not give advice on how to hire translators; it is silent about where to get good fruit or what sort of things to say to people you might meet in a Jerusalem street. For Castela, such matters are not of pilgrim concern, and indeed can only increase the risk of danger, of pilgrims being consumed by the fires of desires they never even knew they had.

The pilgrim should not, according to Castela, look to his traveling companions for guidance, and should certainly not seek to make friends with others he may meet on the road. He should always travel in the protection of guides, should never leave pilgrim company, never address locals, never be caught noting down observations in situ, for fear of being, as another pilgrim puts it "caressed as spies

[39] For more on these writers see Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the Eye to See," *History and Anthropology* 9, no. 2–3 (1996), 139–90; see also Paul Smith, "Montaigne, Juste Lipse et l'art du voyage," *The Romanic Review* 94, no. 1–2 (2003): 73–91; and Justin Stagl, et al., *Apodemiken: eine räsonnierte Bibliographie der reisetheoretischen Literatur des 16., 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1983).

[40] Castela, *Guide*, f. 4v.

are caressed."[41] At times, Castela is more specific still as to the dangers of curiosity: the pilgrim should "not be curious to see the insolent acts and monkey business practised by night at the parties and balls" given by the local residents of Jerusalem "for fear of being induced or constrained to succumb to sodomy."[42] The only sure way to avoid the danger of losing one's way, or oneself, is to maintain absolute difference from others, including—indeed, as I have been arguing in this chapter, *especially*—from other travelers; this is best achieved through indifference to all but the sacred features of the place and its people. To remain your Christian, holy self, you must pretend to be someone you are not, someone radically unable to communicate with others outside the pilgrim group. For communication is pollution. It is a strategy as blunt as it is brutal: "the best thing would be to counterfeit, when amongst others, the deaf, dumb and blind man."[43] Castela's ideal pilgrim would, then, be a traveler without eyes and tongue; his holiness would derive not only from his having experienced and overcome physical danger, nor yet from his having come into contact with sacred sites. Rather, his exemplary fidelity would reveal itself in his traveling to places of (to paraphrase Lithgow) "heathnicke" seduction, and there resisting what he sees, smells and hears. His heroism would be a function of his having gone away to visit what Gregory of Nyssa had long since termed "seats of contagion," and having returned fundamentally unchanged.[44]

Friends, Faith, and Strangers

> The Fremdest man, the truest friend to me,
> A stranger is a Sainct, whom I adore.
> For manie friendes, from faithfull friendship flee,
> Law-bound affection failes then framelings more.[45]

The grounds of the "Conflict" articulated in the poem with which we began this exploration of the changing fortunes of pilgrimage in the European Renaissance should now be clearer. At stake is the

[41] Nicolas de Hault, *Le Voyage de Hierusalem* (Chaumont en Bassigny: Abraham Saugrin, 1601), f. 1r.

[42] Castela, *Guide*, f. 60v.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Gregory of Nyssa, *Select Writings and Letters* (*Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, II, 5), eds., W. Moore and H.A. Wilson (Oxford: Parker and Co, 1893), 382–3.

[45] Lithgow, "Conflict," ll, 91–4.

status, and the confessional ownership, of pilgrimage itself. Lithgow's word-play, most of it structured by opposites that turn out to be pairs, is here conjugated from the initial, playful pairing: "fremd" [ie stranger or foreigner] and "friend." This leads to "stranger" and "sainct," the one displacing the other as the object of the traveler's worshipful attention, before "manie friendes" prove less "faithfull" than "framelings" [strangers or foreigners again], whom the traveler encounters on the road. The adoration of "strangers" (enacted in the many strange words which denote them, and figured in the image of "The wonderful traveler and his attendant" which Lithgow seems to have had made of himself (Fig. 5.1)) makes plain the fact that underlying the play of opposites here is the serious, significant appropriation of the catholic rhetoric of pilgrimage by the protestant 'pilgrim' Lithgow. It is with argument such as this that Castela and other counter-reformation priests found themselves engaged; their handbooks, enjoining pilgrims to avoid all contact with strangers, seek to police pilgrim identity, and to keep it wholesome, separate, pure. But not all Catholic pilgrims share Castela's tone, and not all priests forbid contact with others encountered on the pilgrim road. Jean Zuallart, for instance, a Catholic traveler from the Low Countries, whose account was published first in Italian in Rome in 1587, and then in French in Antwerp in 1608, affirms that "the best thing is for the traveler to call to mind the words of Ecclesiastes: 'That sweet talk produces a greater number of friends, and brings about peace among enemies'." Even the priest and pilgrim legislator Jean du Blioul acknowledges that "good company is no small thing on so long a journey."[46]

Nonetheless, the forcefulness of the counter-reformation priest's point, and the several senses of Lithgow's protestant and punning play on "faithfulness," and on the relative worth of—not to mention the danger presented by—"fremds" and "friendes," are dramatized in the account of the last of the pilgrim texts to be considered here, Henry Timberlake's *True and strange discourse of the trauailes of two English Pilgrimes and the admirable accidents [that] befell them alongside the rare Antiquities, Monuments and notable memories (concording with the ancient remembrances in the holy Scripture) they sawe in Terra Sancta […] written by one of them, on the behalfe of himselfe, and his fellow Pilgrime.* First published

[46] Jean Zuallart, *Le Tresdevot Voyage de Jerusalem* (Anvers: Arnould Conincx, 1608), 3; du Blioul, *Voyage*, 21.

Fig. 5.1. 'William Lithgow, the Wonderful Traveller and his Attendant' (William Lithgow) after an Unknown artist, woodcut. National Portrait Gallery, London.

in London in 1603, Timberlake's *Discourse* went through an extraordinary number of editions, printings and reworkings over the course of the seventeenth century. Advertised on the title page as being "of no lesse admiration, then well worth the regarding," it tells of a trip to Jerusalem undertaken by himself and one John Burrell, his fellow English Protestant friend, both of whom were otherwise involved in Mediterranean trade. Pilgrimage, then, as incidental tourism, a digression from the more serious business of business. And yet their journey, for all that it was a diversion, was no pleasure cruise. Timberlake's tale is one of danger not merely witnessed, and suffered, but also, as he grumpily, parenthetically, notes, paid for in good English coin: "(for the sight of this and other things cost me an hundred Marks in fiftie daies)."[47] Time, for the merchant, is clearly

[47] Henry Timberlake, *True and strange discourse of the trauailes of two English Pilgrimes and the admirable accidents [that] befell them alongside the rare Antiquities, Monuments and notable memories (concording with the ancient remembrances in the holy Scripture) they sawe in Terra Sancta […] written by one of them, on the behalfe of himselfe, and his fellow Pilgrime* (London: Thomas Archer, 1603), 3. Early English Books Online alone lists twelve different copies, and there exist still more. There is to my knowledge no critical study of this

money, but the *Discourse* is more than simply a generic Merchant's Tale on the Jerusalem pilgrim road; it is also an unusual record of cross-cultural encounter, and of friendship, narrated—as is the case with other pilgrims whose stories we have followed here—under the sign of loss. Timberlake himself survives; but, as we shall see below, one of his fellow pilgrims, encountered on the journey, for all that he saves the narrator's life, does not.

The account begins, as many pilgrim texts do, with the author naming his traveling companions: Anthony Thorpe, who is never named again, and John Burrell, the second of the "two Englishe Pilgrimes," on the "behalfe" of whom Timberlake, the title-page suggests, writes the "letter" home. Having decided to make the pilgrimage, the Englishmen set out from Cairo on March 13, 1601 and, for safety's sake, join a caravan of over a thousand souls, headed for Damsacus. Among those traveling were "Turkes Jewes and Christians," as well as "Greekes and Armenians, whose purposed trauaile lay to Ierusalem, which made us the gladder of their companie."[48] For all the company, the travelers are nonetheless subject to frequent attacks from "wilde Arabes," especially at night, and on the morning of the eighteenth, Timberlake interrupts his narrative to note, "but I forgot to tell you, that my fellow Pilgrime M. John Burrell escaped very narrowly in the last nights bickering."[49] At Ramoth Gilead (east of the Jordan river in Palestine), on the twenty-fourth, the caravan divided, the larger group heading towards Damascus, and the Christians setting their sights on Jerusalem. Having finally arrived at the city gates, Timberlake was, he says, overjoyed "to behold so holy a place with mine eies, wherof I had read so often before."[50]

His fellow English Protestant friend, John Burrell, has some advice for Timberlake concerning the authorities in Jerusalem: when they ask you where you are from, say you are "a Greeke, onely to avoid going to Masse." But Timberlake "refused so to do, telling him, even at the gates entraunce, that I would neither denie my Countrie nor Religion."[51] For his insistence on playing the role of the blustering

text, or its reception. Page references are (unless otherwise indicated) to the 1603 edition.

[48] Ibid., 5.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., 6.

[51] Ibid.

Englishman who refuses to go in any sense native, Timberlake is thrown into prison, suspected by the authorities—who had never heard, "either of my Queene or my Countrey"—of being a spy. His erstwhile companion, Burrell, happy to claim Greek identity for the time being, finds himself accommodated by the Franciscans, and subject to the Catholic Guardian's protection. Timberlake claims to have remained unrepentant: "I said I would rather bee protected under the Turke," he crows, friendless, now it seems, and captive, too.[52]

Just as John Burrell departs from the narrative, another friend arrives on the scene. In fact he had already, silently, been there for some time, but only now, with the 'false' friend gone, turned Greek, and subject to Catholic protection, does this other emerge. On the selfsame page in which he loses his unfaithful friend, this other becomes Timberlake's true companion, confirming the pilgrim in his identity, and in the rightness of keeping faith: "it pleased hope (that very day) to deliver mee, and graunt my passe as a Protestant, without yielding to any other ceremonie then cariage of a waxe candle only."[53] "Hope's" (or as subsequent editions to the 1603 text have it: God's) instrument in this design was a man named, in the text, only as "a Moore," who accompanies the pilgrim for the remainder of his journey (and beyond). To explain the manner of the new friend's appearance, Timberlake takes his readers, by way of a flashback, to an earlier stage in the journey where the "Moore" had first made himself known.

Back in Ramoth Gilead, some days earlier, while he had been washing his linen at a fountain, Timberlake had been offered help in his task by a stranger, "a Moore," who, after calling him by his name, reminded the merchant pilgrim, "in the Frank tongue," of the fact that they were, already, old friends. The narrative then gives itself over to the stranger's (translated, or ventriloquised) voice, as he chides the pilgrim in the following terms:

> Why Captaine, I hope you have not forgotten me, for it is not yet fortie dayes since you set me a land at *Alexandria*, with the rest of those passengers you brought from *Argier* in your ship called the *Troyan*. And here is another in this caravan whom you likewise brought in companie with you, and would not be a little glad to see you.[54]

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid., 7.

The men were not, Timberlake then discovered (but only now reveals), locals, but themselves pilgrims on their way to Damascus, "which place they call *Sham*, and thence to *Beggdatt*, which we call *Babylon*, thence to *Mecha* to make a *Hadgee* [the Muslim pilgrimage or hajj]."[55] It turns out, then, that the "Moore" had been silently accompanying, indeed protecting, Timberlake and Burrell since they had joined the caravan, indeed had been instrumental in their so doing. But only when Burrell leaves his friend Timberlake to be cast into prison is the Muslim pilgrim's silence broken, and his role in the providential drama revealed: "This man (in my mind) God sent to be the meanes of mine immediate deliuerie." And indeed the "Moore," on discovering Timberlake to be in prison, follows his many tears with an injunction to the adamant Englishman to "be of good comfort," before explaining to the Ottoman authorities that his friend the Englishman should be freed, since he was no spy, but "a Mariner of a Shippe, which had brought 250 or 300 Moores into *Egypt* from *Argier* and *Tunis*, their iourney being unto *Mecha*."[56] That he owes his release, and his ability to conduct his own pilgrimage to his trading profession, and more especially to the intercession of a fellow-pilgrim, of a different faith, is not lost on Timberlake: "This Moore (in regard he was a Muzzle-man) preuailed."[57]

Once released, Timberlake joins the group of Christians lodging under the Franciscans' "Popish protection." He is welcomed by "twelve fat-fed friars," has his feet washed by one of their number, is sung to by the others, and both preached to and wondered at by the "*Pater Guardian*"—the head of the Franciscans in Jerusalem, also sometimes referred to as the *Custos Terrae Sanctae*, or Custodian of the Holy Land—for refusing to go to mass. Reunited (thanks to the "Moore's" intervention) with his countryman, Burrell, Timberlake returns to the first person plural narrative form, and the two travelers conform to English type: turning up their noses at foreign food ("strange cates have as strange qualities"), but acknowledging, grudgingly, that "we were lodged decently."[58] The following morning (March 26), Timberlake and Burrell are taken by a friar and a "*Trouchman*" (translator) to perform a reluctant, occasionally sceptical,

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid., 8; here, as elsewhere, Timberlake's publishers mark place-names and other exotic words in his text as particularly "worth the regarding."

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid., 9.

pilgrimage along the Via Dolorosa. "Who," he asks, "is this woman Veronica not mentioned in the scriptures?" The next day they venture out beyond the city walls, where again and again Timberlake's sentences tell of his difference from his "Popish" hosts and guide, asserting his particular, uncontaminated Protestant and English identity. On the Mount of Olives, for instance, on being shown the "place of our Saviours Ascension," Timberlake and Burrell are "commaunded withall to say 5 *Pater Nosters*, and 5 *Ave Maries*, but we said the Lords praier, took notice of the place and departed."[59]

Throughout the next few days in the place he calls "Terra Sancta," Timberlake writes as if anticipating Lithgow's later self-defense of the Protestant Pilgrime in Catholic company: "I enter not their Kirkes, as vpon doubt/ Of faith; but their strange erroures to find out."[60] He writes, then, one of the first, and most striking accounts of how English and Scottish Protestants, from Lithgow to Purchas to Bunyan and beyond, made of pilgrimage a kind of negative national progress; a journey whose credit was defined in opposition to Popish superstition, and to other travelers' habitual and proverbial "leasings."[61] His account derives its force not only from the degree of danger endured by the traveler in his travels, nor yet from his providentially secured survival. Nor is it, finally, a function of his *difference* from other travelers on the road. For all of these are, as I have tried to argue here, tropes and figures which belong as much to Catholic as to Protestant pilgrimage in the early modern period. The energy of Timberlake's text is generated rather by the combination of an assertion of confessional difference (here articulated as the denial of the truth of "Popish" claims to having ascertained the distinctiveness of this or that singular or sacred place or thing), with a narrative of cross-cultural encounter (framed as a response to overtures of friendship from pilgrims of another faith). It is this that allows him to use the possessive pronoun when talking about "my Moore," even as he acknowledges that he owes his very survival to the

[59] Ibid., 11.

[60] Lithgow, "Conflict," ll. 255–6.

[61] "Leasings" here means "lies," as in the disclaimer which opens Timberlake's letter: "Although it passe as a generall prouerbe, that trauailers may tel leasings by authoritie: yet I being no way daunted by that bugbeare-thunderbolt, but confidently standing on the iustice of my cause, my kinde commendations to all you my deare friendes first remembred, thus from *Ierusalem* I beginne to salute you." (Timberlake, *Discourse*, 1).

not-quite stranger; and so to trade, not in sacred singularities displayed in his text, but on the figure of the adamantly undaunted "English Pilgrime," upholding fidelity both to his Confession, and to his cultural, trading Profession.

Leaving Jerusalem on March 31, 1601, "in companie of my Moore that holpe me out of prison" (not, then, with John Burrell), Timberlake makes his difficult and dangerous way back to Cairo. There the two traveling companions separate. Timberlake gave "the honest Moore sixe pieces of gold, with some other things beside to his contentment, and sent [him] to *Mecha* with the *Carauan*."[62] Neither the 1603 edition of the *Discourse* nor the excerpt included in Purchas narrates either pilgrim's journey home, though most later editions take their readers with Timberlake as far as his boat, moored in Alexandria.[63] All subsequent versions (except Purchas) also add to the final paragraph of the 1603 text a closing phrase to the sentence quoted above in which Timberlake tells of the "Moore's" departure for Mecca; the phrase runs, "in which journey, as he returned againe, he died."

Epilogue: 'Questions of Travel'

I began with a dialog between two poems. I begin my conclusion with the final lines of the title poem of Elizabeth Bishop's 1965 collection, *Questions of Travel*. Bishop closes her poem with the sound of rain followed by a not-quite silence; not quite, since it is the silence of writing, here staged as internal dialog. The dialog is conducted between the poet herself as traveler to that land Thevet and Léry called "France Antarctique," and as stay-at-home reader of Blaise Pascal's *Pensées*. Like Lithgow's "Conflict" between the Pilgrime and his Muse, Bishop's "Questions" reads as a kind of *mise-en-abyme* of the book of travels, a self-conscious staging of the process of reflection

[62] Timberlake, *Discourse*, 26.

[63] Timberlake's account was excerpted as chapter seventeen of book one, part one of the monumental collection of travels published by Samuel Purchas as *HAKLVYTVS POSTHUMUS or PVRCHAS HIS PILGRIMES. Contayning a History of the World, in Sea voyages. & lande-Trauells, by Englishmen & others. Wherein Gods Wonders in Nature* & *Prouidence, The Actes. Arts. Varieties.* & *Vanities of Men, with a world of the Worlds Rarities, are by a world of Eywitnesse-Authors, Related to the World. Some left written by Mr. Hakluyt at his death. More since added. His also perused,* & *perfected. All examined· abreuiated, Illustrated with Notes. Enlarged with Discourses. Adorned with pictures, and Expressed in Mapps. In fower Parts. Each containing fiue Bookes* (London: Henry Fetherston, 1625).

about displacements at once undergone and imagined. It is a reflection which also turns outwards to the reader, turns out to ask of us—implied friends and engaged fellow-readers—questions both of travel and of the art of staying at home:

> *two hours of unrelenting oratory*
> *and then a sudden golden silence*
> *in which the traveler takes a notebook, writes:*
>
> "*Is it lack of imagination that makes us come*
> *to imagined places, not just stay at home?*
> *Or could Pascal have been not entirely right*
> *about just sitting quietly in one's room?*
>
> *Continent, city, country, society:*
> *the choice is never wide and never free.*
> *And here, or there… No. Should we have stayed at home,*
> *wherever that may be?*" [64]

Bishop's "Questions" also serve to introduce one last moment from among the pilgrim texts we have followed in this chapter. It is a scene which pilgrim narratives, with their generically sanctioned focus on the outward journey, on the dangers of the road, and on the death of friends and companions on the way home, rarely (though by no means never) narrate: that of homecoming.[65] If the returning pilgrim, Charles Philippe, is troubled, haunted by the guilt of survival, the wrongness of his returning home without Denis Possot, his friend and traveling companion, he says nothing of it. But Philippe's return home, once he finally comes to narrate it in the terse conclusion to the account, tells us much about the pilgrim who learns to say "I" in his narrative, and to bring "I" home. Philippe's text records, then, the voice of a pilgrim who publishes his composite account on his return, and who with no apparent polemical or pastoral purpose other than that of honouring his dead friend, allows himself to bear further witness—witness, that is to a very particular experience. The stage is set, or should have been, for a noisy recognition scene: the pilgrim sees, and is recognised by his village, his family, his wife. Indeed, the narrative initially holds out the promise of just such a scene, with a feast of fish on offer, since the pilgrim arrives home on

[64] Bishop, "Questions of Travel," in *Complete Poems*, 93–4, ll.57–67.

[65] For the argument that narration of a pilgrim's return is generically improper, see D.R. Howard, *Writers and Pilgrims: Medieval Pilgrimage Narratives and their Posterity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

a fasting day. But as Charles Philippe moves towards his final sentence the homecoming changes tone, and his text becomes marked by a peculiar silence: not now, or not only, the silence of the friend who never made it back, but also that of the one who never left, the one who did not accompany the pilgrim on his travels, namely his stay-at-home companion, his wife.

As far as I can tell—and I have looked, for a long time, and I am not alone in so doing—not one European pilgrimage narrative written by a woman in the Renaissance was published (and none have been found in manuscript either). Possot himself is one of the few pilgrims to mention the presence of—and the only one to name—two nuns on the pilgrim boat at Jaffa: "sister Julienne from Crese and sister Isabel from Spain."[66] What Charles Philippe's wife (not named by her husband in his account) might have said, or written, had she had the desire, and the means, to travel to Jerusalem, either alone, with her husband, or with a friend, we do not know, and cannot say. All we think we know, and can say, is that the husband who came back home to her from his own pilgrimage looked so utterly transformed that she seemed to him to not know what to say. Philippe's final paragraph, which starts some few leagues away from home, and with which I shall conclude, picking it up mid-way through, runs as follows:

> *lesquelz furent fort joyeulx de nous veoir, et allasmes ensemble audict Villenauxe, auquel lieu trouvasmes Monsieur le commandeur de la Ferté-Gaulcher lequel nous feist gros honneur et ayant pesché ung petit estang, pour ce qu'il estoyt jour mesgre, nous feit apporter en ung drap des carpes et brochets assez pour repaistre XXX hommes, desquelz en prinsmes une partie et renvoyasmes le reste. Peu après, arriva le recepveur de Monsieur le mareschale de la Marche et ma femme, laquelle ne me recognoissoit plus à cause que j'avoys grande barbe et estoys devenu mesgre et tout changé de couleur; et ne peust parler à moy.* [67]
>
> And they were very glad to see us, and we went on together to the village of Villenaux, where we found his Lordship the commander of Ferté-Gaucher, who showed us great honour in that, after having fished in a little lake, since it was a fasting day, he sent us, wrapped up in a sheet, some carp and some pike, enough to feed full thirty men, which we took some good part of, sending back the remainder with thanks. A little later, there arrived both the receiver of M. the Mares-

[66] Possot, *Voyage*, 155; for more on this, and a brief, clear discussion of the silence of women pilgrims, see Gomez-Géraud, *Le Crépuscule*, 269–71.

[67] Possot[/Philippe], *Voyage*, 228.

chale de la Marche, and my wife, who no longer recognized me, because I had grown a great beard, and had become thin, and my colour was all changed; and she did not know what to say to me/she could not speak to me.

CHAPTER SIX

POSTCARDS FROM THE HAREM: THE CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF NICCOLAO MANUCCI'S BOOK OF TRAVELS

Pompa Banerjee

Traveling is a teacher of many things and he who wanders without learning anything can only be said to have the head of an ass.
—Niccolao Manucci, 2: 162

What is the position of a European narrator in an Eastern harem? With whose voice does he speak? With what authority does he write? When the voyager sends home a narrative 'postcard,' which sites does he foreground for future travelers? I begin with these questions in order to tease out the significance, embedded in these questions, of the larger issues of identity, emerging nationalisms, and narrative authority in European representations of the East—issues which are themselves enmeshed in the tangled concerns of the multicultural, multiethnic marketplaces of the East. In order to do so I examine the account of the seventeenth-century Venetian traveler Niccolao Manucci who spent fifty-six years in India (1653–1709).[1] Manucci's narrative describes in vivid detail his experiences inside an Indian harem; yet, as I will show, even as his story gets underway, the text rapidly undermines the narrator's authority and identity, and throws into question the generic conventions of travel writing itself.

Manucci's commentary on the harem appears to fall within well-established generic conventions. Accounts of harems form a distinctive sub-genre within the vast body of early modern European travel writing that records and interprets the complex history of contact

[1] Manucci's name has been transcribed variously as Manucci, Manouchi, Manuchi, Manuzzi, Manoushi, etc. I follow the name Manucci as it seems to be the author's preferred spelling. Unless otherwise noted, quotations are from Niccolao Manucci, *Storia do Mogor or Mogul India 1653–1708*, ed. and trans., William Irvine, 4 vols. (London: John Murray, 1907–1908, reprint New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1981).

between Europeans and the various cultures they encountered. In general, travel-writers work from within a set of customary expectations; their accounts claim authority and validity from certain well-defined sources. Early modern European narrative voices usually project the personae of male, Christian, heterosexual observers speaking to similarly imagined audiences. With varying degrees of self-consciousness, the narrators situate themselves in the history of travel and knowledge production. In their reports, such writers might simultaneously embrace Herodotus, Homer, Alexander, Julius Caesar, Cicero, or Tacitus, as well as Mandeville, Columbus, Marco Polo, Vasco da Gama, or the contemporaries and famous compatriots in whose footsteps they travel. Writing from within such conventions, under the 'eye,' so to speak, of distinguished ancient and contemporary travel authorities, writers then repeatedly invoke their own unique experiences, emphasizing the value of eyewitness testimony, or in some cases, the merit of native informants such as local priests and translators. Although the writers arrive long after that mythic 'first' encounter, many travel-writers position their experiences as unique and inaugural, as if they were first at the distant scene. Many present these exotic scenes in literary snapshots and 'postcards' that lay bare the foreign culture for audiences at home; the voyager becomes the liminal figure traversing the boundaries between home and abroad with varying degrees of linguistic and cultural ease. In other words, as Joan-Pau Rubiés notes, travel literature becomes a form of cultural translation using language games with a set of rules and assumptions that communicate and mark a social context, and record and interpret cultural difference.[2]

If such a process of cultural translation is underway in the genre of travel writing, then the process is severely undermined when writers describe harems. In most travel writing, voices of authority are privileged; they speak from *outside* the foreign cultures in omniscient voices that bring to light the things the authors saw and experienced. Such literary and generic practices, I want to suggest, are radically dislocated in the sub-genre of European writing on harems, and Manucci's narrative clearly exposes the fault lines of such a literary enterprise.

[2] Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes, 1250–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), xiv.

To be sure, Manucci's account is neither the first nor the last in the popular tradition of European travel writing on harems.[3] Nor is the narrative drive of his text fundamentally divergent from other relations in this genre; Manucci's voyeuristic exposé of the secret, forbidden recesses of Eastern harems charts a predictable course as it directs the reader's prurient gaze to previously veiled and unknown erotic zones. The promise of Manucci's text lies in his tortured ruminations on his personhood and national and cultural affiliation, in his linguistic uncertainty as he negotiates one language after another, in the gaps between his description of certain events in the harem and the reader's disparate interpretations of those events, and above all in the acute erosion of his narrative authority during the course of his relation. Manucci's vivid literary style is riddled with contradictions, and the uneasy relationship between his colorful life and his text makes his observations on the harem a compelling site for this inquiry.

It is noteworthy that the manuscript copies of Manucci's Indian experiences undertook journeys almost as colorful and remarkable as did their author. In 1701, Manucci charged André Boreau-Deslandes, an official with the Compagnie Française des Indes Orientale, to convey to Europe the first copy of his manuscript written in Latin and Portuguese. Deslandes died in Galle without completing his charge. The manuscript was subsequently acquired by the Jesuit Père Catrou who made substantial alterations to the text before publishing it four years later as *Histoire Generale de l'empire du Mogol depuis sa fondation, Sur les mémoires portugais de M. Manouchi, Vénitien. Par le père François Catrou de la Compagnie de Jésus* (Paris: Chez Guillaume de Voys, 1705). Catrou made drastic changes to the manuscript, adding new material from other travelers and extolling the virtue of the Jesuit mission in India. Catrou also expunged most of Manucci's personal narrative, and reshaped the manuscript to fit his agenda. In January 1706, after he became aware of the extensive and unauthorized changes in his manuscript, Manucci asked Father Eusebius, a French Capuchin, to deliver to Europe a copy of the original manuscript along with subsequent additions, and a letter in

[3] This genre of representation appears at least as early as the medieval secular romances such as *Floris and Blanchefleur* and *Sir Bevis of Hampton*, and is rejuvenated in early eighteenth century texts such as Antoine Galland's *Les Mille et une nuits* (Paris: Barbin, 1704–1717). See Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myth of the Orient* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 14–36.

Latin addressed to the doge and the Venetian senate. That manuscript was deposited in the San Marco library in Venice, and in 1741, catalogued by Antonio Maria Zanetti as Codex XLIV.[4] After a colorful textual history, the manuscript was translated into English in 1907, and published as *Storia do Mogor*. The textual production of Manucci's manuscripts reminds us of the hazards and uncertainties of publishing travelogues in early modern Europe for a readership hungry for details of exotic Eastern novelties.

The two sections of this essay unpack the global and local resonances of the questions of identity, nationalisms, and narrative authority in harem accounts. The first, titled *Authority and Postcards from the Edge* locates the narrator as a literary character in his own account. This section contextualizes Manucci's travel writing in global terms of national and cultural boundaries and transnational identities that interact in complex, webbed, cultural networks. It addresses issues such as narrative authority and audience expectation through the trope of the literary postcard. The second section, *Narrative Authority and the Harem*, analyzes Manucci's experiences inside the harem. It also illustrates the ways his narrative authority is dissipated. It suggests, that by definition, harems, like other forbidden spaces, invite description even as they repel the gaze of the observer.

Authority and Postcards from the Edge

Manucci's travels in the East lasted fifty-six years, from 1653 to 1709. He presents himself as a self-exiled wanderer who never returns but always hankers for a home frozen in a past of unchanging values—a home, that is Venice and Europe, imagined and longed for, a location that Manucci thinks he identifies with but, equally clearly in his text, a home that had vanished a long time ago. In November 1653, Manucci ran away from Venice. He was fourteen. He was a stowaway in a ship bound for Smyrna where he became the protégé of "an Englishman in disguise called Lord Bellomont (1:5)." Bellomont or Viscount Henry Bard was an English royalist who had joined the exiled King Charles in Oxford. Newly appointed by Charles II as

[4] See Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Latina et Italica D. Marci Bibliotheca Codicum manuscriptorum per titulos digestia* (Venice: Simonem Occhi 1741). For the history of Manucci's manuscript and Zanetti's role, see William Irvine, "Introduction," in Manucci, *Storia do Mogor or Mogul,* 1, xvii–lxxxvii.

"Extraordinary Ambassadour" (1:72) to Shah Abbas II of Persia and the Emperor of Morocco, Bellomont was in the East to fulfill a specific mission. As Charles's emissary, Bellomont was instructed to reclaim the "revenue, palaces, jewels, plate and royal ornaments, together with our fleet, and forces" that the Shah had seized from the English crown and the East India Company merchants in the form of custom duties (1:72). Manucci accompanied Bellomont to Persia. They stayed in Isfahan for a year until 1655 and, in January 1656, Manucci reached Surat on the west coast of India. There, Manucci became an artilleryman in the service of Prince Dara Shikoh eldest son of the emperor Shahjahan, the reigning Mughal emperor. He participated in many skirmishes although it is not clear if he fired a shot.[5] In time, Manucci became a self-taught physician, an observer of the Mughal court, and an interpreter and negotiator in the political intrigues of several European states in India. His extraordinarily long Indian career saw swift reversals of fortune, a narrow escape from the Portuguese Inquisition in Goa, involvement in the Mughal dynastic struggles, court intrigue, some unsavory escapades, a few male protector figures, one marriage, and several escapes from "unsuitable" ladies. His vivid and extremely influential narrative offers a fascinating account of late seventeenth-century Mughal court culture.

Manucci presents himself as the main player in the drama of his life. My use of words such as 'player' and 'drama' signals the fiction-making that is necessarily at work, especially when there is a long gap—in Manucci's case, about forty-five years—between lived experiences and their written accounts. In this instance, fictionalization suggests representation and narrative, *histoire*, rather than falsehood. In his narrative, Manucci foregrounds himself as the central character, a literary persona in a cosmopolitan drama. His tale takes on the flavor of a sprawling picaresque, with Manucci himself as a *picaro* looming large over the vast array of colorful characters in a swiftly changing landscape. Certainly, self-portrayal and characterization are unavoidable to a degree in any kind of self-reflexive writing—autobiography, journal writing, or travelogue. And, as Ruth Yeazell observes, when it comes to harems, many reports are simply delu-

[5] Irvine observes that Manucci was variously employed as a soldier of fortune; but although Manucci claimed to have participated in many skirmishes, he described all the conflicts, for instance the historic Battle of Samurgarh (1658), from the point of view of a spectator, not a soldier: Irvine, "Introduction," lxxvii.

sional fantasies; indeed, the first sentence of Yeazell's study on harems reads, "Any study of the West's relations with the harem must be in large part a study of the imagination."[6] But harem accounts are fictional in other special ways; in seeking to represent the unseen or forbidden, such narratives invite absences and gaps. Inevitably, they become mired in contradictions so that it is sometimes difficult to separate fact from fantasy. The internal fissures and inconsistencies in these narratives make for ragged histories patched over with fantasy. When narrators become characters in their own narratives, they become subject to all sorts of destabilizing influences. Frequently, their identities become disposable, interchangeable, and fluid; they become enmeshed in the surrounding dramas of national identity, territorial and imperial appropriations, and commercial enterprise. They are often unable to carve out a strong narrative voice in the web of contradictory ideologies and loyalties that draw them in different directions.

Manucci's narrative self-consciously projects himself as an actor playing a part in an exotic theatre, switching his personhood, profession, and national identity as swiftly as one exchanges one disguise for another. And that is why the source of his narrative authority is perpetually in question. Consider Manucci's carefully imagined self-portrait at eighteen. The representation of his younger self appears after he has spent thirty-four years at the Mughal court. Sometime before 1701—that is the date when Manucci dispatched the first copy of his manuscript to Europe—Manucci recalls the events of 1656 when he was eighteen.[7]

He sees his younger self as an ingénue, a precocious, gifted child brought out before admiring guests by an adoring parent. Travelers, however, habitually fictionalize their youthful selves—the example that readily comes to mind is that of the older John Smith, far from Virginia, writing of a young John Smith coming of age reading Machiavelli and Marcus Aurelius and dreaming of Roman civility

[6] Ruth Bernard Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind: Passages of Western Art and Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 1. Writers comment on the inaccessibility of the harem and the paucity of details regarding its internal functioning. See Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 113, "Ottoman narrative sources are virtually silent with regard to life within the harem."

[7] This is the ill-fated manuscript which ended up in the hands of Père Catrou, and was eventually published as François Catrou, *Histoire generale de l'empire du Mogol* (Paris: A La Haye, Chez Guillaume de Voys, 1705).

and the westward translation of empire.[8] In a similar ruminative vein, Manucci describes how he was sent for at the court of Prince Dara Shikoh in Delhi in 1656. Manucci relives the drama of the encounter, projecting his own appreciation of his youthful charm on the unsuspecting prince: "He was delighted to see a youth of not more than eighteen years and a foreigner, with such quick-wittedness that he had learned to make the proper obeisances without any shyness" (1: 94).

But what kind of character does Manucci stage? The following pages will trace the fundamental uncertainty that bedevils his self-characterization. Before Manucci enters a harem, or attempts to describe it, almost nothing in his varied life and career points to stable identity markers. Decades of wandering had unmoored him from his native soil. He was no longer part of a coherent social structure that anchored him within a particular community through religious, cultural and linguistic ties.

Early in his account, Manucci had claimed privilege and authority for his narrative by presenting himself as a sophisticated, multilingual, multicultural Venetian straddling spaces East and West. He had strategically showcased his linguistic skills:

> When I left Venice I already knew sufficiently how to speak the Italian language, and in addition, a little French. During this journey I learnt the Turkish and Persian languages. Finding myself established in India, I now set to work to learn the Indian tongue. Furthermore, as I was desirous of knowing about matters in the Mughal kingdom, I found an aged man of letters, who offered to read to me the 'Royal Chronicles of the Mogul kings and princes.' Therefore, I am of the opinion that the reader will be glad to listen to me, seeing that I have special information. (1: 96)

The "I" of this passage does not indicate a point of origin for a self attached to a particular culture, religion, state or geographical locale. Rather, as this passage suggests, Manucci anchors his narrative authority as well as his identity in the experiential sphere of the accomplished, multilingual voyager who is always in transit, at home anywhere in the world. Manucci claims the "aged man of letters" as a witness who authenticates his account. In his mastery of Italian,

[8] On John Smith and the fashioning of an English gentleman, see Pompa Banerjee, "The White Othello," in *Envisioning an English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the Atlantic World*, ed., Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 135–51, esp. 146–51

French, Turkish, Persian, and "the Indian language," Manucci reminds the reader that his remarkable linguistic skills enable him to negotiate various cultures and to harvest "special information" unavailable to other writers who are entrenched in a particular locale or culture.

Yet the question that lingers is what is Manucci's mother tongue? What *is* one's mother tongue: the language one learns first, or the language of prolonged and irreversible immersion, the language one grows into, thinks in, and uses to express one's experience? Either way, Manucci's account offers no clear answer. Recall that in 1706, Manucci had sent the second copy of his manuscript to the doge and senate of Venice protesting Catrou's editorial piracy. However, Manucci wrote, he had always kept an original with him and would seek to rectify Catrou's errors, misrepresentations, and usurpation "of my labours and fatigues during so many years."[9] In this letter, Manucci's comment on his use of language is instructive because it illuminates the issue of identity and the mother tongue under discussion:

> Nor must it be thought strange if various languages appear in the work now sent, for according to the amanuensis whom I chanced upon, did I compose the work sometimes in French, sometimes in Italian, and occasionally in Portuguese.[10]

Manucci continued, "Demanding pardon if I have made mistakes in words or in spelling, for in this land of India I have employed my maternal language only on this occasion, in which I profess myself."[11] Given Manucci's prolific linguistic promiscuity as he negotiates his roles and tongue between Italian, French, Turkish, Portuguese, English, Farsi, and any number of local Indian languages, one has to ask: In which language *does* Manucci profess himself? From which position does he speak? It is not clear. When writing this letter in Latin, did Manucci think of himself as a citizen of Venice petitioning the Venetian senate? Certainly, he presents himself as the inheritor of the Venetian cultural legacy, "a client and nursling of the most Serene Republic."[12] The use of Latin suggests an umbilical bond with the culture and civilization of his ancestral homeland and the

[9] Irvine, "Introduction," xxvi.
[10] Irvine, "Introduction," xxxv.
[11] Ibid., xxxvi–xxxvii.
[12] Ibid., xxxiii.

larger European scholarly community. Yet, he immediately reminds the senate that he had left Venice at the age of fourteen and a larger world now claimed him. He represents himself simultaneously as multiple characters speaking in many different tongues, concurrently inhabiting many cultural spaces. Manucci becomes the ultimate amphibian, neither European nor quite Indian, but belonging to both, negotiating his way through various ethnic, political, linguistic and geographical locations.[13]

But Manucci is reluctant to embrace his amphibian cultural multiplicity. Instead, he insistently categorizes himself as "European," rather than "Indian." But it is precisely his struggle to hold on to some vestige of a prior European identity conferred on him by birthright that undercuts his sense of personhood. The account of Manucci's prolonged stay of fifty-six years in India is riven by his repeated claims of distinction from Indians. Yet, the longer he stays in India, the more difficult it becomes to maintain absolute difference. Recall that Manucci was fourteen years old when he ran away from Venice. In a lifetime spent in India, Manucci had adopted many guises. He had arrived at the Mughal court at the age of eighteen dressed like an Ottoman Turk:

> [W]ith a turban of red velvet bound with a blue ribbon, and dressed in satin of the same colour, also a waist-cloth of a gold-flowered pattern with a red ground. [The emperor] was amused to see me got up like this, and asked the reason for adopting such a costume, and why I did

[13] In writing about Manucci's claim to his homeland, I do not suggest a nascent form of nationalism recognizable at once to Manucci and the Venetian senate. For early modern forms of nationalisms hardly point to stable categories of meaning. Rather, as many writers note, they signal the unstable and shifting web of political contingencies and patchworks of ethnic and racial identities that gesture toward a common space; the discourses of nascent forms of nationalism represent complex cultural negotiations. See Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Furthermore, as Benedict Anderson has posited, nationalism often is an invisible bond, "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1994), 6. On national identity and national consciousness, see also John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and Matthew A. Greenfield, "Fragments of Nationalisms in *Troilus and Cressida*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51, 2 (2000): 181–200. In that sense, Manucci seeks to reconnect to a Venice that is both real and imagined, a space threaded through with unseen but nevertheless shared cultural bonds.

> not adopt the Mogul fashions, whereupon I acquainted him of the journey that I had made and the countries through which I had passed. (1: 87)

Manucci's identity evokes a patchwork, an aggregation of ribbons, waist-cloths, words and phrases from alien tongues, mismatched foreign residues of his travels over the world. Like Montaigne, Manucci may well declare, "our matters are but parcels huddled up, and peeces patched together."[14] Bearing in mind Benedict Anderson's description of emergent nationalisms as imagined communities, we recall that 'nation' harks back to a collective sovereignty of a people.[15] But in Manucci's case, the question becomes, which people?—the sovereign will of the community Manucci is mired in at any given moment or the imagined community of a distant Venice? Neither and both, Manucci's narrative seems to suggest. For later, Manucci matches his attire to his place of residence, adopting Mughal clothes when necessary, and European clothes in European-controlled territories. He dresses as a Carmelite to elude the long reach of the Goa Inquisition, as an Augustinian friar to escape from another tight situation, continually shaking off identities with dizzying theatricality.

Reproduced below, this portrait of a turbaned Manucci in the opulent garb of a Mughal courtier appeared in a volume of portraits he sent from India (Fig. 6.1). In his 1706 letter to the Venetian senate, Manucci noted that he had asked an Indian artist, one Mir Muhammad, to make portraits of several Indian kings and other notables. That volume of pictures was sent to Venice, and in 1741 cataloged by Zanetti. In 1797, the portraits were restored and sent to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, where they remain today in the Department of Engravings.[16]

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[14] Michel de Montaigne, "Of the inconstancie of our actions," in "*Essais*," trans., John Florio, ed., J.I.M. Stewart (New York: Modern Library, 1933), 296. By Manucci's time, variations of "Turkish" costume were already well integrated into the Venetian and European imagination, see Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph Neumann, eds., *Ottoman Costumes From Textile to Identity* (Istanbul: Eren, 2004).

[15] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 182

[16] Manucci, who had spared no expenses to prepare the volume of portraits, was proud of his endeavors. "So far as I know," he wrote to the Venetian senate, " no one has yet imparted such portraits to the public; or if any ingenious person has so done, this collection of mine has nothing in common with such, mine being the veritable, which the others cannot be." See Irvine, "Introduction," xvii–lvii, and William Irvine, "Note on Nicolaò Manucci and his *Storia do Mogor*," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (October, 1903):723–33, esp. 728.

Fig. 6.1. "Le Portrait de l'auteur de l'Histoire du Mogol," from a portrait volume prepared by Nicolaò Manucci. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Department of Engravings, Ref. No. M39300. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Department of Engravings.

Manucci's portrait, like his narrative, presents himself front and center. While his torso, draped in the rich robes and sash of a Mughal courtier, faces the viewer, his face and feet appear in profile in the tradition of Mughal miniaturization. He towers over a much smaller, very dark figure dressed in a much less grand style to the left of the portrait. Manucci holds the pulse of the man, possibly demonstrating his competence as a physician or perhaps illustrating his grip on the native culture. Overall, the portrait racially inscribes Manucci's position as a superior, white European well-versed in taking the pulse of the alien culture, even as it simultaneously affirms his status as a fair-skinned Mughal nobleman.

Manucci's careers and professions indicate as well the absence of stable associations. He advances from stowaway and companion to an artilleryman to a self-taught physician to a political negotiator among various local and European powers, Mughal, Portuguese, French, and English. It is telling that his chosen professions cross national affiliations: the Venetian Manucci is a soldier in the army of the Mughal prince, yet he receives a patent of knighthood—not from Venice or the Mughal court in India, but in the Portuguese Order of St. Iago. His 'nation' is not a unified construct in any "system of cultural signification," but an interstitial, provisionary space that marks a series of passing cultural attachments.[17]

Furthermore, in a lifetime of voyaging, nothing in his familial relationships points to a center that holds. Manucci goes from being the young protégé of the Viscount Bellomont to being under the guardianship of a friend, Clodio Malier, who, as the older Manucci writes of his younger self, "carried me off to his house." Additionally, he notes, "This was a man who knew me well, that, seeing me unprotected, he had taken me into his house," adding that "I was a youth of quality" (1: 92). Perhaps by "quality," Frenchman Clodio Malier designated more than class and breeding. The "quality" Malier himself practiced in India was one of ceaseless wandering, as he transformed himself from Claude Maille, merchant of Bourges, to surgeon, soldier, gunner, and opportunist in India. And it is this chameleonic 'quality' that he passes on to Manucci when he was contemplating leaving the court and the company of Indians. Manucci was determined "to return to Surat that I might find myself among Europeans" (1: 91). Malier persuaded him to stay on "so that I might report on

[17] Homi Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 1.

the riches and greatness of the kings of Mogol" (1. 92), thereby turning Manucci away from the comforts of 'home' within the familiar expatriate European community in Surat to the uncertainties of a restless, nomadic life in a strange land where he drifted, like Malier, from one 'quality' to another, switching professions and personalities in search of the next version of the identity that would suit the needs of the moment.

Even as he 'passed' from one version of himself to another, Manucci guarded his 'inner' Christian and European self against foreign contamination. In particular, he remained vigilant about contact with Indian women, perhaps fearful of relationships that would irrevocably alter his 'inner' European identity. For, as every seasoned European traveler well knew, India was a snare in that area. Manucci again like John Smith in his relation of 'other' geographic spaces writes of having foiled the wicked designs of several female agents of the prince who try to deceive him into marriage and Islamic conversion (2: 162, 372, 377–78).[18] A beautiful, wealthy Muslim widow wants to elope with him (2: 200–201); a promiscuous, mixed-race widow tries to entrap him (3: 163–64). Despite such distractions, Manucci refuses to go native. He is determined not to muddle things. So, when he does marry, he weds a respectable widow, one Elizabeth Hartley Clarke, "a lady born in India, but of good English Catholic parents" (2: 278). The "but" is revealing. Although his wife was born in India, her good English blood and proper Catholic upbringing would presumably help Manucci to retain a sense of an anterior, European identity, untouched and unchanged by his long sojourn in foreign lands. In his narrative Manucci is, one might say, a character in search of a vanished character.

Given the shifts in identity and guise in Manucci's self-representation, it is interesting that after carefully checking sources and initiating local inquiries, William Irvine, the translator and editor of Manucci's travels found no trace of a Manucci in Venice. Inquiries resulted in a single certainty. 'Manucci' was not a patrician name. Seventeenth-century police reports did not record the disappearance of a fourteen-year old boy in 1656, nor was there any mention of

[18] On John Smith and 'other' women, see Banerjee, "The White Othello," 138–42.

Viscount Bellomont's stay in or departure from Venice.[19] All we have is Manucci's testimony. Just as India had severed Manucci's ties from Venice and condemned him to a lifetime of guises and masks in foreign locations, Venice had erased from its historical records all traces of the young runaway who had left so long ago.

In his book, Manucci invoked his considerable time spent in India as the source of his narrative authority. He had the luxury of time, time spent learning about the culture he unveiled for his audience, "I am one who has had time enough; I lived with the men best informed of any; I had long converse with them, and they told me the truth" (1: 114). Knowledge, experience, and above all, time—these are Manucci's markers of authority. Yet, time is precisely what undermines his carefully constructed persona because he stays too long and is caught in the web. I seize the metaphor of the web to remind us that travel narratives do not depict one person's singular journey and experience—every journey reenacts the history of contact, every experience is profoundly enmeshed in exchanges both local and global, and the travelers' own histories are written from within the histories of many others.[20]

Yet, if we are to believe Claude Lévi-Strauss, Manucci had an advantage. In *Tristes tropiques*, Lévi-Strauss appears to lament the loss of original experiences for jaded modern travelers:

> I wished I had lived in the days of *real* journeys, when it was still possible to see the full splendour of a spectacle that had not yet been blighted, polluted and spoilt: I wished I had not trodden that ground as myself, but as Bernier, Tavernier, or Manucci did… When was the best time to see India? At what period would the study of the Brazilian savages have afforded the purest satisfaction, and revealed them in their least adulterated state? Would it have been better to arrive in Rio in the eighteenth century with Bougainville, or in the sixteenth with Léry and Thevet?[21]

Lévi-Strauss rewrites his original regret for the loss of original experiences into an ironic reversal, gesturing precisely to the impossibility

[19] Irvine, "Introduction," lv.

[20] Ballantyne and Burton invoke precisely this metaphor of empire as a web, interconnected networks of contact and exchange, of imperial power and appropriation, with the same potential for fissures and disruption as every other network. See Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 3.

[21] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes tropiques* (1955), trans., John and Doreen Weightman (New York: Athenaeum, 1974), 43.

of reaching a point of pristine distillation of a culture's "least adulterated state." He also recognizes the travel writer's unsurpassed ability to recreate a slice of life that was extinct; only the traveler's words would rekindle that original experience for the reader. But if in 1955, Lévi-Strauss thought Manucci might have experienced a more 'authentic,' even primal encounter, in the late 1600s Manucci certainly did not think so. Indeed, in the seventeenth century, Manucci might have said what Lévi-Strauss would say in 1955: "A few hundred years hence, in this same place, another traveler, as despairing of himself, will mourn the disappearance of what I might have seen, but failed to see."[22] But despite what Lévi-Strauss thought in the middle of the twentieth century, Manucci himself felt deprived of such primal experiences; his India was hardly pristine in the seventeenth century.

Travelers' distillations of complex experiences depended on shedding light on what was previously unseen or unknown. But travelers such as Manucci knew with depressing clarity that they were not participating in inaugural scenes of such historic significance that their actions would be replayed for generations to come. Other travelers had preceded him as had many traders. Manucci had belatedly entered the well-established, remarkably sophisticated networks and trading systems of the Chinese, Jews, Arabs, Gujaratis, and Malays who interacted in a multifocal, multilingual, multi-ethnic marketplace; it was a world that functioned quite smoothly without Manucci. He was a latecomer in that part of the globe and there was nothing left for him to discover. Besides, everywhere he went he was following in someone else's footsteps. In particular, he was haunted by the ghost of François Bernier who had been everywhere before him. Throughout his narrative, Manucci felt compelled to take on Bernier, sometimes obliquely as in "*Some authors* assert that Khalilullah Khan was beaten by shoes in the audience of Dara. I know of a certainty that this is not so" (1: 87). At other times, Manucci addressed Bernier directly and petulantly: "Therefore it is incumbent on me, begging his pardon, to say that what he writes is untrue" (1: 187, fn. 66).

Operating from within a network, haunted by ghosts and voices from the past, writers like Manucci are destabilized to begin with. He follows in the footprints of others and is able to offer cultural difference only at the margins of his narrative. Besides, his identity

[22] Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes tropiques*, 43.

is so compromised that one is forced to renegotiate the issue of the traveler's narrative authority. Instead of bolstering his narrative voice, all of the conventional markers of the authority of travel writers—eyewitness testimony, time spent at a distant place, familiarity with foreign cultures, linguistic dexterity—seem to undermine him.

Lévi-Strauss' observations lay bare another dimension of the travel-writer's authority undone by subsequent historiography, what I will call the 'postcards from the edge' syndrome. Like postcards sent from one's last port of call or photographs brought back from exotic parts of the globe, travel reports shed light on events and phenomena in distant parts of the world. Generations of readers have fixated on these postcard glimpses of travel to such an extent that entire decades of human contact have been reduced to a single memorable image, like snapshots pressed in the narrative albums of early modern travelogues.

Take for instance Jan van der Straet's famous drawing of the encounter between Vespucci and 'America,' an encounter made copiously available through Theodore Galle's engraving of the image (Fig. 6.2). The scene dramatizes the naked, prone figure of a female America awaiting her rape and conquest by a fully-clothed Vespucci brandishing a banner with the Southern Cross, sword, and astrolabe. In the distance, roasting body parts, flames, and rising smoke indicate a cannibal feast in progress. Everything about the image—the foregrounded, exposed figure of America on the hammock, the savage banquet, the strange flora and fauna bordering the right edge of the picture—all speak to the need for the civilizing mission implicitly promised by Vespucci who has apparently just now made landfall.

This image has been imaginatively pressed into service as representing a precious inaugural moment, that of the 'awakening,' or alternately a monstrous birth—the rape and conquest of the land, the vanished histories of the original inhabitants, and in many academic analyses, the primal scream of a new world order slouching towards Jamestown (or a similar foundational locale) to be born.[23]

[23] See for instance, Louis Montrose, "The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery," in *New World Encounters*, ed., Stephen Greenblatt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 177–217, esp. 178–9. Anthony Pagden, "Prologue: Europe and the World Around," in *Early Modern Europe: An Oxford History*, ed., Euan Cameron (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1–28, esp. 17.

Fig. 6.2. America receives Vespucci, ca. 1580. Engraved by Theodore Galle, based on Jan van der Straet's drawing. Smithsonian Institute Libraries, SIL28-198-06. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institute Libraries, Washington, D.C.

Early modern historiography seems to be mesmerized by such snapshot encounters between Europeans and their others. Sanjay Subrahmanyam observes:

> The matter has been rehearsed time and again, whether with Vasco da Gama and the Samudri Raja in Kerala, Hernán Cortés and Moctezuma in Mexico, Pizarro and the Inca Atahualpa in the Andes, or Captain Cook and his interlocutors in the South Seas; we might well add Akbar and Xavier to that list. Evolving fashions may turn the valencies this way or that, but the *topos* itself remains dominant, freezing rather complex processes into a memorable Kodak moment, and extracting as much metaphorical juice as can be obtained from these dramatic structural oppositions.[24]

To be sure, such "Kodak moments" or 'postcards' do not easily fit into precise categories. No standard practice governs the reproduction of images in early modern texts; frequently, the provenance of illustrations is murky. Manucci, as we saw, commissioned an Indian artist to paint original portraits which he conveyed to Europe along with his manuscript. Other writers improvise. Englishman Peter Mundy made two trips to India (1628 and 1636) at the behest of the East India Company. In the preface of his *Travels* Mundy confessed that he had lost his notes: "I Doe allsoe confesse thatt Many things are Misplaced."[25] It is not clear if Mundy also lost a set of illustrations along with his notes. We know, however, that he sent a provocative 'postcard' of a scene of Hindu widow burning. Mundy's manuscript of his travels, *Itinerarium Mundii* (1639) contains this 'postcard' in a pencil sketch gone over in ink of a sati drawn on a sheet of paper pasted in (Fig. 6.3). The fact that the sketch was pasted into a space specifically left by the scribe indicates that it already existed at the time of this transcript. Immediately above it, on the same folio, appears Mundy's explanation, "I have set it downe in figure, as neere as I can."[26] Mundy's manuscript does not indicate if he had saved this 'postcard' from the time of his travels in India (1628–34,

[24] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: Mughals and Franks* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6.

[25] See Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608–1667*, ed., Richard C. Temple, 6 vols. (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1907–1936), 6.

[26] Peter Mundy, *Itinerarium Mundii* (1639), Bodleian Library, Ms. Rawlinson A.315, fol. 31r. I am indebted to Dr. Bruce Barker-Benfield, Senior Assistant Librarian of Special Collections and Western Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, for his assistance with Mundy's manuscript as well as his commentary on the image.

Fig. 6.3. Peter Mundy, "Passages att Suratt," *Itinerarium Mundii*, 1639. Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson A.315, fol. 31r. Courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

1636–37), or if in Europe in 1639 (the date of the manuscript), almost a decade after the beginning of his first visit to India, he was recapitulating the scene for his audience. The phrase "as neere as I can" suggests recollection rather than immediate experience.[27] The course of Mundy's 'postcard' is a familiar one. In other cases, editors and translators imprint their choices on manuscripts by including, excluding, or adding illustrations or 'postcards' in editorial maneuvers which the authors may or may not have been aware of. Despite such irregularities, however, visual representations—regardless of their provenance—have a vigorous afterlife. The 'postcards' under discussion, the rich assortment of illustrations that circulated with the travelogues, fulfilled certain cultural functions within their narratives.

Such 'postcards' have recognizable identity markers. Consider the interminable elephants from India. The following image "from the Court of the Great Mogul" is reproduced from Thomas Coryat's travelogue; it is one of several in the genre (Fig. 6.4). The stylized elephant dominating the frontispiece of Coryat's *Travels* (London, 1616) is a familiar example of an early modern postcard that comically encoded an entire culture's exotic character in a freeze-frame.[28] The diminutive rider uneasily perched on the gigantic beast is incongruously dressed in European clothes; it is difficult to tell with certainty who is taming whom. To his credit, however, Coryat seems to be aware of the comic disparities in the image. The frontispiece of his book declares "O, what will he ride, when his yeares expire? / The world must ride him; or he will all tire." Self-deprecating humor notwithstanding, the image fulfils its role as a cultural postcard. Coryat's self-portrait atop the Indian elephant suggests deft management; it signals his taming of the unruly, outlandish beast as well as his command of the alien, outlandish, elephantine culture of India.

The images in such 'postcards' are crystallizations of the sender's impressions of the foreign culture. Furthermore, the postcards represent an insider's appraisal of something outside of the self. After all, visitors send postcards to those at home; and visitors, by definition,

[27] See also Pompa Banerjee, *Burning Women, Widows, Witches, and Early Modern Travel Narratives of India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 13–14, and fn. 37.

[28] Thomas Coriate, *Thomas Coriate Traueller for the English Wits: Greeting from the Court of the Great Mogvl, Resident at the Towne of Asmere in Easterne India* (London: W. Jaggard and Henry Fetherton, 1616).

THOMAS CORIATE
Traueller for the English
VVits : Greeting.
From the Court of the Great MOGVL, Reſi-
dent at the Towne of ASMERE, in
Eaſterne INDIA.
Printed by W. Iaggard, and Henry Fetherſton.
1616.

Fig. 6.4. "From the Court of the Great Mogul," Thomas Coriate, *Thomas Coriate Traueller for the English Wits: Greeting from the Court of the Great Mogvl*, London: Printed by W. Iaggard and Henry Fetherstone, 1616. Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 5811, title page. Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C.

return to the home culture, the address where the postcards are sent. While Coryat's elephant comments on the gigantic, bizarre appeal of foreign climes, other early modern postcards contain unwritten codes that elicit moral condemnation. Scores of early modern images representing 'heathen' cultural practices function as special postcards that encapsulate the viewer's judgment.

One such example, centering on India, is found in Abraham Roger's discussion of Hinduism. Roger, a Dutch missionary, spent a decade in Pulicat, a Dutch colony in South India. He wrote extensively on what he believed were the errors and fallacies in the Hindu religion and Brahminical rituals.[29] The illustrated frontispiece of the French translation of Roger's text, *La Porte Ouverte* (Amsterdam, 1670), visually transfers the ideological thrust of the author's commentary on sati, Hindu widow burning, into the image (Fig. 6.5). The central female figure thrown into the flames has the proportions of a child, but her uncovered breasts underscore the gendered cruelty of the act. Her childlike prospect reinforces the appalling violence and brutality of the practice. The oversized devil hovering over the scene pours "unholy" water, presumably to initiate the widow into a hellish baptism of fiery, eternal damnation. The "porte ouverte" of the title becomes the 'open door' of the gate leading to India as well as the entrance to hell.[30]

As their popularity suggests, such cultural postcards, or memorable 'Kodak' moments, dramatize and telescope certain events or practices; they reduce the contingencies and conflicts of lived experiences in foreign lands into pure distillations that are transported by way of written words or pictures to their audiences at home. Additionally, such postcards may transform the travel writers into larger-than-life heroes, colossal protagonists striding across the globe to engage in near mythical encounters and pronounce unchallengeable judgment. Yet, in real life, such Kodak moments were rare, especially in the East which was already well-trodden years before

[29] Roger's text on Hinduism was published as *De open deure tot het verborgen Heydendom* (Leyden: 1651), The 'postcard' under discussion in this essay appears in the French translation of Roger's work. See Abraham Roger, *La Porte Ouverte, pour parvenir à la connoissance du Paganisme caché ou La vraye representation de la vie, des mœurs, de la Religion, & du service divin des Brahmines, qui demeurent sur les Costes de Chromondel, & aux Pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam: Chez Jean Schipper, 1670).

[30] See a useful discussion of this image in Kate Teltscher, *India Inscribed: European Writing about India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 51–73; also Banerjee, *Burning Women*, 88–90.

Fig. 6.5. "La Porte Ouverte pour parvenir à la Paganisme cache," Abraham Roger, *La Porte Ouverte, pour parvenir à la connoissance du Paganisme caché*, Amsterdam: chez Jean Schipper, 1670. British Library, 147.b.15. By permission of the British Library.

1498 when Vasco da Gama made landfall in India, and before Europeans ventured East in large numbers. Such postcard souvenirs of their voyages were at odds with the travelers' experiences.

Narrative Authority and the Harem

When, in his *Essays*, Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592) asked, "If man know not himselfe, how can hee know his functions and forces?" he was reinforcing the early modern turn towards self-examination.[31] However, Manucci finds that knowing himself in India is a taxing enterprise; he finds himself mired in contradictions and inconstancies, reminiscent of Montaigne's tribute to fickleness, not self-knowledge: "whosoever looketh narrowly about himselfe, shall hardly see himselfe twise in one same state. Sometimes I give my soule one visage, and sometimes another, according unto the posture or side I lay her in."[32]

Montaigne's observations shed light on Manucci's experience inside an Indian harem, revealing, in particular, a curious indeterminacy of gaze and gender that obtains in the space of the harem. It is a critical commonplace that the classed, raced, gendered, policed, managed or unruly body is the locus of many discourses and imperial ideologies, especially those concerned with enclosed spaces for women.[33] Harems are identified as sites of unbridled sexuality and therefore the obsessive focus of many European travel writers but they are also spaces that stubbornly deflect the writers' gaze. Early modern travelers repeatedly draw attention to this metaphorical blindness. François Bernier (1625–1688), French physician and

[31] Original emphasis, Michel de Montaigne, "An Apologie of Raymond Sebond," in *Essais*, 505–6.

[32] Montaigne, "Inconstancie," in *Essais*, 296.

[33] See among others, Leila Ahmed, "Western Ethnocentrism and the Perceptions of the Harem," *Feminist Studies* 8 (1982), 522–34; Malek Alloula, The *Colonial Harem*, trans., Myrna Godzich (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myth of Orient*, 614–36; Joseph W. Lew, "Lady Mary's Portable Seraglio," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 24.4 (Summer 1991): 432–50; Lisa Lowe, *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms (*Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Billie Mellman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*; Teltscher, *India Inscribed*; Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996); and Meyda Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

erudite observer of the Mughal court notes, "It would afford me pleasure to conduct you to the *Seraglio*, as I have introduced you into other parts of the fortress. But who is the traveler that can describe from ocular observation the interior of that building?"[34] In a similar vein, Dutch painter and traveler M. Corneille le Bruyn wrote of the seraglio, " 'tis impossible to give any Description thereof."[35] And we remember that it is the act of witnessing, seeing 'with own eyes' that lends authority to the traveler. Yet, both the space of the seraglio as well as its inhabitants firmly resist intrusive eyes.

The two images that follow, (Fig. 6.6) Nicholas Nicolay's depiction of a veiled woman "A Woman Turke going to the Cittie" (London, 1585) and (Fig. 6.7) George Sandys's "The Grand Seigneur's Seraglio at Constantinople" (London, 1627) are representative samples of a particular pictorial style of representation.[36] Like the postcards we have discussed above, such images reappear frequently in early modern texts.[37] However, the coding they 'telegraph' is not what other postcards, say Coryat's elephants, transmit to their viewers. Despite the obvious differences between the illustrations of a veiled human figure and a building, the two images—Nicolay's Turkish woman and the sultan's seraglio at Constantinople—are metaphorically, uncannily similar because both are walled spaces that resist the eye. In Nicolay's portrait, the Turkish woman's heavy veils, robes, sashes, and shoes cover her from head to toe. Nicolay's travelogue underscores the subterranean connection between the veil and the walled seraglio within an impenetrable fortress."[38] In his *written* depiction of the Ottoman sultan's seraglio, Nicolay replicates the *visual*

[34] See François Bernier, *Travels in the Moghul Empire, AD 1656–1668*, trans. on the basis of Irving Brock's version, annotated by Archibald Constable in 1891 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934; reprint Delhi: Munshilal Manoharlal, 1992), 267.

[35] See M. Corneille de Bruyn, *A Voyage to the Levant; or, Travels in the Principal parts of Asia Minor, the Islands of Scio, Rhodes, Cyprus &c. with an Account of the most Considerable Cities of Egypt, Syria, and the Holy Land*, trans., W. J. (London: Jacob Tonson, 1702), 31.

[36] See Nicholas Nicolay, *The Nauigations, peregrinations and voyages made into Turkie by Nicholas Nicolay Daulphinois, Lord of Arfeuile, Chamberlaine and Geographer ordinarie to the King of Fraunce: conteining sundry singularities which the Author hath there seene and obserued*, trans., T. Washington the younger (London: Thomas Dawson, 1585); and George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun Anno Dom. 1610, in foure bookes, containing a description of the Turkish Empire, of Ægypt, of the Holy Land, of the Remote parts of Italy, and Ilands adjoyning*, 3rd ed. (London: R. Allot, 1627).

[37] On colonial 'postcards' of Algerian women, see Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*.

[38] See also Alain Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court: European Fantasies of the East*, trans., Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1998), 126. Writers investigating the function of

Fig 6.6. "A Woman Turke going through the Cittie," Nicholas Nicolay, *The Nauigations, peregrinations and voyages made into Turkie by Nicholas Nicolay*, trans., T. Washington the younger, London: Thomas Dawson, 1585. Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 18574, copy 1, pg. 63. Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C.

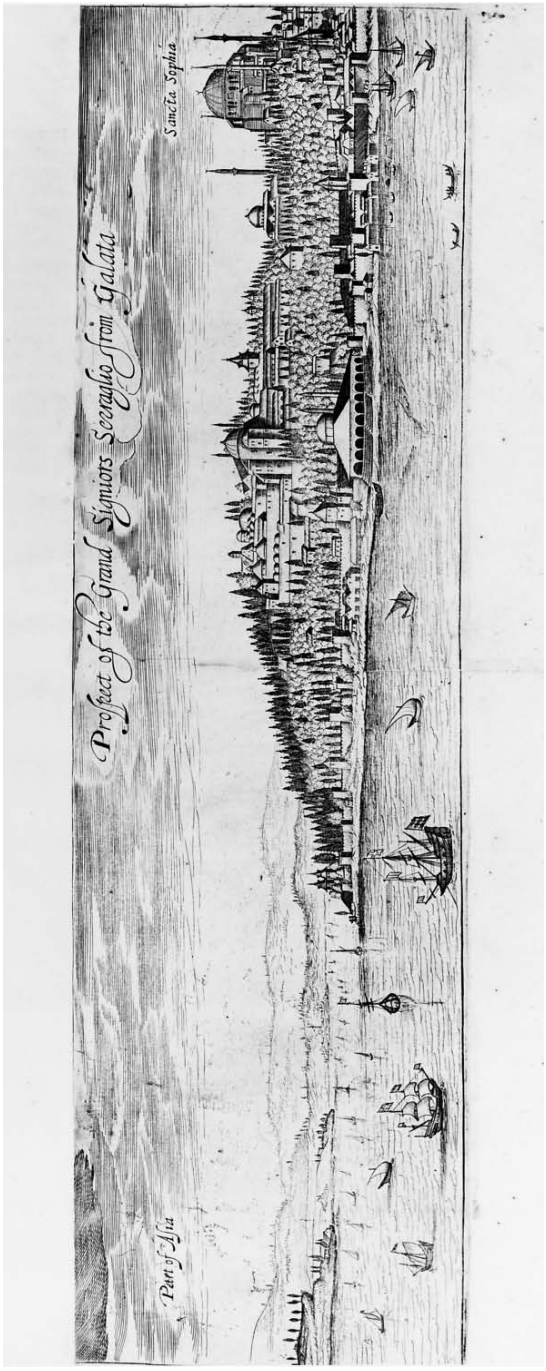

Fig. 6.7. "The Grand Signior's Seraglio at Constantinople," George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun Anno Dom. 1610*, London: Printed for R. Allot, 1627. Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 21728, copy 2, illustration between pages 32–33. Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C.

characteristics of his portrait of the veiled woman. The seraglio, Nicolay writes:

> containeth 2000. Paces in circuit, inclosed with hygh walles of fifteene cubites, and of thicknesse accordingly, without any towres: it hath onely two gates, whereof the one commonly standeth open, being wel guarded by Eunuches and the other almost neuer opened.[39]

The secret space, encircled by thick, high walls, deflects the European tourist's prying eyes. It offers, Nicolay reminds us, no high vantage point that allows a spectator to have a view over the walls, for the whole structure is "without any towers." The punctilious details—two thousand paces in circuit, high walls of fifteen cubits and similar thickness, two gates, one of which never opens—are numerical and rhetorical surrogates for the incalculable blankness that reminds Nicolay of what he cannot see. The veil and the wall are both opaque. Unlike other postcards that *reveal*, these *conceal*. The figure of Nicolay's veiled "Woman Turke" (Fig. 6.6) and the barricaded space of the sultan's palace in Sandys's depiction (Fig. 6.7) signal enclosed, inner spaces that impede vision; both induce blindness of sorts.

Manucci makes a similar discovery about the harem. Like Nicolay, he comes to realize that the walls of the sultan's seraglio are not so porous. As Manucci attempts to draw a postcard of the harem for his European audiences, he encounters unexpected obstacles. The inner sanctum is closely guarded; it keeps in the women and keeps out all men except the sultan and the eunuchs. How does one represent the unseen in a postcard? Yet Manucci repeatedly informs his reader that only he is privileged with a penetrating vision that enables him to 'discover' the forbidden harem. He notes that ordinarily, "When a physician enters, he is conducted by the eunuchs with his head and body covered as far down as the waist, and he is taken out again the same way" (2: 328). Manucci's description of the protocol regarding doctors visiting sick patients in the harem is suspiciously close to Bernier's observations about his own harem visit, "a *Kachmire* shawl covered my head, hanging like a large scarf down to my feet, and an eunuch led me by the hand, as if I had been a blind man."[40]

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the veil in colonial spaces record a similar resistance to such scopic voyeurism. See Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 7, and Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*, 39–40.

[39] Nicolay, *The Nauigations*, 953.

[40] Bernier, *Travels in the Moghul Empire*, 267.

We know that Manucci had read Bernier with attention, and we have noted his frustration with Bernier who had been everywhere before him. This indication of Bernier's inability to provide his readers with a glimpse of the harem allows Manucci to draw a distinction between Bernier's metaphorical blindness and authorial inadequacy and his own unclouded vision and infallible authorial prowess. Bernier's failure to 'see' allows Manucci to establish himself as a more skilled writer than his rival.

Bernier had admitted his inability to see anything or to send a 'postcard' of the seraglio. Manucci, however, notes that he is not subject to the laws that regulate the conduct of everyone else. Unlike Bernier, Manucci does not don the shroud worn by other physicians because his Christianity, he tells the reader, affords him a veil of purity. He claims he was permitted to enter the harem without a blindfold because his chaste conduct apparently persuaded the prince that "the minds of Christians were not filthy like those of the Mahomedans" (2: 375). Manucci appoints himself the most chaste exemplar of Christians. His "true" faith, unblemished by time spent among the unbelievers, clearly marks him as exceptional; in contrast to Bernier who was shrouded and saw nothing, he is the only one who is exempt from the laws of the harem. However, Manucci's explanation raises perplexing questions. For instance, if his passport into the harem was his faith, then did that mean that Manucci had opened the door that had always remained closed? Could other Christian travelers armed with similar passports of faith also pass through the newly opened door? Or alternatively, did Manucci's "chaste conduct" render him innocuous, like a celibate monk? Or perhaps a eunuch?

Manucci does not raise these questions. Instead, he presents his foray into the harem as a journey into an exotic realm, a virgin territory. In her discussion of French surgeon Ambroise Paré's 1573 edition of *Des monstres et prodige*s, Patricia Parker observes that Paré's description of female "secret parts" shares a common vocabulary with European discovery narratives. It is a shared "language of opening, uncovering or bringing to light something at the same time characterized as 'monstrous' or 'obscene.'"[41] Like Paré, Manucci

[41] As Parker notes, the discovery trope characterizes European travel accounts from at least as early as Peter Martyr's history of the New World. In England, his work was available in *The History of travayle in the West and East Indies*, trans., Richard Eden (London: Richard Jugge, 1577). See Patricia Parker, "Fantasies of 'Race' and

affects the surgical, piercing eye in his anatomization of the harem. He assumes the authorial stance of a Vespucci encountering a nude and slumbering 'America.' Manucci's ocular penetration recalls both the pornographic gaze assessing Paré's female "discoveries" as well as the gaze of those imperial "seers," the early English voyagers in Virginia, who were urged by Hakluyt "with Argus eies to see."[42] His harem commentary employs the style of a sexualized discovery narrative, complete with the tropes of unveiling and penetration recurrent in early modern European travel literature. In other words, Manucci attempts to send one of those postcards discussed above. But things are not what they seem in the harem.

Manucci claims almost panoptic omniscience in the harem. Describing the secret drinking habit of the princess, he writes:

> The lady's drinking was at night, when various delightful pranks, music, dancing and acting were going on around her. Things arrived at such a pass that sometimes she was unable to stand, and they had to carry her to bed. I say this because I was admitted on familiar terms to this house, and I was deep in the confidence of the principal ladies and eunuchs in her service. (1: 211)

At first, he adopts a resolute, masculine confidence; neither limited access nor nightfall impairs his ability to know and see. And when ocular testimony falters, he 'knows' the harem vicariously through native informants. Manucci then exposes the veiled inner workings of the harem to the smallest financial detail, cataloging household expenses of the women, their jewelry and clothing. He includes astonishing lists of the names (and their meaning) of the harem women: Gulal (the rose), Chambely (the jasmine flower), Chumpa (the name of an Indian flower), Moty (the pearl), Mirg-nain (gazelle-eyed), and so on (2: 312–15). His trenchant gaze 'discovers' and demystifies every recess of the harem for his European audiences.

In keeping with his role as a writer of discovery narratives aimed at a masculine, heterosexual audience, Manucci dramatizes salacious

'Gender': Africa, Othello and Bringing to Light," in *Women, 'Race,' and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, eds., Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (London: Routledge, 1994), 84–100. See also Mary C. Fuller, "Raleigh's Fugitive Gold: Reference and Deferral in The Discoverie of Guiana," in *New World Encounters*, ed., Greenblatt, 218–40; and Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: "Discoveries" of India in the Language of Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1996).

[42] Quoted in Parker, "Fantasies," 88.

details of the harem with some relish. Not surprisingly, physicians emerge as central actors in his erotic scenarios.

> There are some who from time to time affect the invalid, simply that they may have the chance of some conversation with and have their pulse felt by the physician who comes to see them. The latter stretches out his hand inside the curtain; they lay hold of it, kiss it, and softly bite it. Some, out of curiosity, apply it to their breast, which has happened to me several times; but I pretended not to notice, in order to conceal what was passing from the matrons and eunuchs then present. (2: 329)

As a protagonist in these libidinous spectacles, Manucci appends his personal experiences to the long Western representational tradition of harems as sites of seduction and erotic spaces of lascivious abandon. By Manucci's time, such representations were conventional, and European readers probably would have expected such details.[43]

If Manucci's early modern audience did expect to read about the limitless debauchery of the harem, they would not have been disappointed. As Manucci tells it, lechery runs rampant in the Mughal harem, and the eunuchs are compelled to execute ever more stringent security measures. One recurrent anxiety appears to be "that some young man in disguise might enter in female dress" (2: 328). Then, as if cross-dressed secret lovers were not enough, Manucci adds for good measure the oft-repeated phobia about certain vegetables, "They search everything with great care … Nor do they permit the entry into the palace of radishes, cucumbers, or similar vegetables that I cannot name" (2: 328).[44] In his retelling, vegetal specters of disembodied and prosthetic male organs drive the eunuchs into paroxysms of anxiety.

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[43] Imagined scenes of lust and intrigue in harems are commonplace in early modern travelogues. See for instance, Bernier, *Travels in the Moghul Empire*, 11–3, 130–3, 267–8; Abbé D. Barthélemy Carré, *The Travels of Abbé Carré in India and the Near East 1672–1674*, trans., Lady Fawcett, ed., Charles Fawcett, 3 vols. (New Delhi: Asian Education Services, 1990), 247–8, 254, 259–60; de Bruyn, *A Voyage to the Levant*, 30–2. See also Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court*; and Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

[44] Early modern travelers are fascinated by the anecdote of the threatening cucumber. See for instance, Robert Withers, *A Description of the Grand Signour's Seraglio or Turkish Emperours Court* (London: J. Ridley, 1653), 55–6.

Manucci notes that the harem women, by their own admission, are sexually deprived and dwell obsessively on physical gratification.

> Thus the women, being shut up with this closeness and constantly watched, and having neither liberty nor occupation, think of nothing but adorning themselves, and their minds dwell on nothing but malice and lewdness. Confession of this was made to me once by one of these ladies herself. (2: 329)

He repeatedly invokes the corruption and lechery in the harem. Women are reared in vice, all manners of lust, and possibly incest.

> [T]hey are bred up in all the Luxury imaginable. As they are generally the Emperor their Father's chief Amusement, their greatest Study is how to endear him. By this means they sometimes obtain more Liberty than is decent for Princesses, and the Rigours of the Cloister are often dispens'd with in their Favour. The Indulgence of the Mogols in this point extends sometimes to a Connivance at their keeping Gallants; the Example of which soon corrupts the whole Seraglio. Idleness together with a delicious way of living and reading wanton Books, must needs be a Source of Vice in Cloisters, where the Power of true Religion restrains to no Rules.[45]

Manucci's use of the word "cloister" simultaneously acknowledges and disavows a kinship with the European convent. To be sure, he employs the word as a register of moral differences between India and Europe. Implicit in his description is the moral distance between Christianity, the religion of temperance and restraint, and Islam, which permits the corruption and wantonness of harems. Furthermore, the "cloister," by localizing a center for collective female authority, also highlights the pervasive anxiety about women's power and mastery in the harem. Scholars have noted a "pattern of inversion" in the harem which is policed by powerful women and where the usual political and gender hierarchies are overturned.[46] The harem also becomes an "erotic universe in which there are no men, a site of social and sexual practices that are not organized around the phallus or a central male authority."[47]

Manucci confronts the harem's virtual impenetrability. This is a space that unmoors his sense of identity because sexual orientation

[45] Attributed to Manucci by Catrou, *The General History of the Mogol Empire*, 328.
[46] Teltscher, *India Inscribed*, 45.
[47] See Lowe, *Critical Terrains*, 48.

becomes crucially dependent on seeing, and the limits of one's vision severely limit self-perception of erotic identity. Manucci soon realizes that even when one is permitted to enter, the harem resists penetration. His own incursion into the inner chambers as a physician allows him to see very little despite his authorial claims to have entered the harem without a veil. When he does see something, he cannot be sure if his eyes can be trusted or not. Consider his account of the peculiar trompe l'oeil practiced in the harem. The incident begins positively for Manucci as the princess attempts to retain him at the Mughal court by asking him to carry off any woman he wants.

> She said to me that she would send for all the daughters of Christians, whether Europeans or Armenians, and I had only to choose the one I liked best … if I would agree she would have all her maids of honour brought before me, and I had only to select the one I most liked … and she should be given to me as wife, nothing remaining but to carry her away to my dwelling. (2: 372–3)

The fantasy of "all her maids of honour" and "all the daughters of Christians" available to him contains the dizzying possibility of living in a world where civil and criminal laws do not apply ("nothing remaining but to carry her away to my dwelling"). Yet Manucci's confidence is rapidly undermined as he simultaneously loses control of his fictive harem and his own masculinity. Unwilling to marry an Indian woman, Manucci tells the princess that he is "incapacitated for marriage" (3: 373). His voluntary 'incapacitation' implies a kinship with the eunuch who must be emasculated before he can enter the presence of the princess. The price for entering the harem includes an impaired masculinity and subsequent sexual encoding as a eunuch. His implied castration also spells his subservience, like a eunuch, to the princess, and by implication, to the sultan, the master of the seraglio.

Unfortunately for Manucci, even playing eunuch does not enable him to see anything clearly, for the women of the harem, as well as his royal patient remain obdurately concealed:

> [S]he ordered me to put my hand inside the curtains of the bed to feel her pulse; for this is the way one has to deal with these ladies… I noted that the arm was thick, muscular, and hairy, and by these signs I knew at once it was a man's arm; and it turned out to be Shah Alam himself. Without delay I rose, and said that the arm I had touched was a man's, not a woman's, and it could be none other than that of the King of the World. At these words the prince burst out laughing, and

> told me I knew how to distinguish the difference between a man and a woman. (2: 373)

The king, in effect, restores Manucci's manhood by 'proving' that Manucci knows the difference between a man and a woman. But the incident underscores the central unsettling aspect of the encounter: even without a blindfold, Manucci sees next to nothing in the harem. The moment the king acknowledges his masculinity, the women become invisible; the "thick, muscular, and hairy" arm of the prince replaces the lure of the princess's arm.

Recall here the discussion of French surgeon Ambroise Paré's 1573 edition *Of Monsters and Prodigies* and the medicalized discourses of uncovering secret parts. Manucci's transplantation in the harem is hardly a surgical triumph. Instead, it involves a rhetorical sex change. His experience reflects the ironic inversion of the physician's gaze in medical practices in Europe. Even before Manucci left Venice, many women were gradually phased out of medical practices in Italy. Guido Ruggiero writes that late-sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Italy witnessed a great deal of resistance to forms of healing and spiritual cures by female practitioners. Humanists, clergy, and academicians stridently condemned spiritual healing practices and forms of popular medicine practiced by women who were denied formal medical education. In addition, the Holy Office and the Inquisition disciplined healers to iron out popular errors and bring healers and healing in line with orthodox Christian teaching.[48] Increasingly female healing practices were aligned with witchcraft and black magic, and medicine practiced by male physicians became the preferred form of healing. For instance, Cosimo Aldana advised his late sixteenth-century Italian readers:

> What do you stupid people think? Do you think that a poor old hag might know something [about healing] when she has spent all her days in some shack [*balza*] spinning with the geese and the hens? What do you commoners think that she could know, if she were not a witch? And if she is a witch, do you want to be cured and returned to health by the Devil's work? … I say freely that I would rather die than regain my health with the Devil's art … Therefore, common people, I tell

[48] See Guido Ruggiero, "The Strange Death of Margarita Marcellini: *Male*, Signs, and the Everyday World of Pre-Modern Medicine," *The American Historical Review*, 106, 4 (October, 2001): 1141–58, esp. 1143 and fn. 6.

> you for your own good when you are sick go to male doctors, and … do not believe in those old ignorant women."[49]

In light of the prolonged cultural shift in attitudes toward female medical practitioners, Manucci may have been aware that although some early modern Italian women practiced medicine and surgery, "Once university faculties of medicine were established in the course of the thirteenth century, women were excluded from advanced medical education and, as a consequence, from the more prestigious and potentially lucrative variety of practice."[50] Indeed, even much later, in the eighteenth century, when dissections were public affairs, norms of decorum, or '*pudeur'* dictated that women did not make "direct anatomical exploration" of human bodies. Often wax models would take the place of the body [51]

In effect, Manucci encounters an erotic substitution in the Indian harem. Debarred from viewing the body of the patient, he is left wearing a veil and blindly examining the pulse of a hairy hand, one might say a prosthetic hand, much like a female physician examining wax body parts in Europe because her gaze was veiled by codes of decency. A surgical and rhetorical sex change has taken place; a surrogate member usurps the place of the desired object. Manucci's situation ironically summons up the familiar Western narrative of the harem lord's mastery of the gaze, his control, and "the ultimate scopic privilege of seeing all," just as the Ottoman sultan invisible to all, watched the outside world with a telescope, a gift from a coun-

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[49] Quoted in Ruggiero, 1143. For the cultural background of medical history in Italy, see Katherine Park, *Doctors and Medicine in Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,1985); Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Siraisi, "Anatomizing the Past: Physicians and History in Renaissance Culture," in *Renaissance Quarterly* 53:1 (Spring 2000), 1–30; William Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Gianna Pomata, *Contracting a Cure: Patients, Healers, and the Law in Early Modern Bologna*, trans., Gianna Pomata with Rosemarie Foy and Anna Taraboletti-Segre (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); and David Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

[50] Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine*, 27. Siraisi documents the unusual case of twenty-four women described as surgeons in Naples between 1273 and 1410.

[51] Angelica Goodden, "Scrutinising the Body: Anatomy and Propriety in Eighteenth-Century France," in *History of Ideas*, ed., Jean Bloch, et al., Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2005), 13.

tryman of Manucci.[52] As Manucci attempts to gaze at the harem, the lord of the harem gazes on Manucci.[53]

The presence of the "king of the world" in place of the supine princess presents Manucci with a paradox. The harem becomes a doubly incapacitating agent that undermines him in unexpected ways. On the one hand, the inability to penetrate it implies a metaphorical blindness, a loss of agency, and an admission of his authorial inadequacy. On the other hand, and as we have seen, his permitted incursions into the harem invite self-emasculation and intensify blindness. Manucci assumes the impotence of the eunuch by being denied the sight of the women he wishes to unveil. Additionally, the episode mischievously offers Manucci as both eunuch and a desired object. In Eastern harems, eunuchs sometimes usurped the place of the women; Manucci resembles a eunuch, who, despite his mutilations, as Grosrichard reminds us, becomes at times the "supremely desirable" erotic end of women.[54] Simultaneously, he is also the forbidden intruder, a man, who is, as Manucci has already reminded his readers, frenziedly desired by the women in the harem.

Even in Manucci's distanced, fictionalized retelling of his experience of the seraglio, the narrative resonates with the impending threat (or promise?) of the dissolution of self, a fluidity of gender, and an unsettling sense of hybridity hovering between European and Indian, Christian and Muslim, inside and outside. Manucci informs his readers that the prince intended to "snare" him in order to "gain me over completely" (2: 374). The prince asks Manucci if he knew there was a European in the palace. The prince's aim, Manucci

[52] A Venetian traveler possibly taught Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623–1640) to use a telescope. See Alain Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court*, 57. The telescope was a novelty in the early seventeenth century. When European travelers visited royal courts in Asia, telescopes were often chosen as rare and costly gifts to Eastern rulers. Of course, not all Asian monarchs regarded the telescope as a marvel. For instance, Sir Thomas Roe who was sent to India as King James's envoy to acquire trading privileges for the East India Company, had no luck with it. In a letter to the Company dated 24 November, 1615, he complained that the king's new "humours must be dayly fedd," and that the Company's gifts "are extremely despised by those [who] have seene them." The "burning glasses and prospectives [telescopes]" are such that he "can buy for sixe peence a peice." See Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India, 1615–1619*, ed., William Forster (London: Hakluyt Society, 1899; reprint New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1990), 76–7.

[53] Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court*, 25.

[54] Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court*, 153, "In the Orient, women have been seen and are seen to marry eunuchs."

suspects, is to make him vulnerable by luring him into a sordid liaison with a woman. However, as the following episode suggests, in the harem, being seduced by a "woman," presumably by the mysterious "European" in the palace, is not necessarily as predictable an event as one might think.

> Instantly, while we were speaking, there came out of a room a very pretty girl, dressed as a man in European style, with a gold-mounted sword at her side. As soon as she saw me she lifted her hat and saluted me. I was conscious at once that it was the prince who had put all this play to amuse himself, and see if he could gain me over. But I feigned the ignoramus, as if I had not noticed anything, returned the bow, and proffered some compliments. Speaking French I went up to her to kiss her, when at once she turned her back and fled. I ran after her, as if to overtake her; but she ran faster than I did. However, I did my utmost to overtake her. Laughing, the prince cried out to me. At his voice I came back with slow steps close to him, much put out at not having succeeding in embracing the young person. When I had come close, he asked me what I wanted to do. I replied that I wanted to embrace and kiss the would-be young man. He assumed to be astonished at such a piece of audacity. (2: 374)

Several erotic possibilities are embedded within this scene as Manucci describes it. Manucci's reconstruction of this elaborate spectacle orchestrated by the prince and his consorts relegates Manucci himself to the margins of his own fantasy. It is from here that he negotiates the complex, often disorienting exchanges between a displaced self of obscure sexual orientation, and the 'other' masquerading as yet another—an Indian dressed as a European, a woman dressed as a young man who is unmasked as a woman. Despite the playfulness of the scene, the anxieties hovering over this encounter threaten to dissolve the carefully sustained differences between India and Europe. Manucci speaks French, the language of European courtship, but the switch to French masks a deep anxiety by signifying a loss of linguistic control. Manucci appears to be under the impression that he is in control of both the action and his own narrative. For example, he believes he is only feigning the ignoramus, or that his sophisticated awareness of the prince's staging of the spectacle makes him a player. But the slippage in Manucci's text, disclosed in his designations which shift from "a very pretty girl" to a "young person" to a "would-be young man," reveals Manucci's own discomfort with the erotic spectacle staged by the prince.

In attempting to anatomize this encounter, one needs to consider its complex erotic potential, especially given the blurring of erotic identities in the scene. What kind of pleasure did Manucci have in mind for his audience? Did he want his audience to think he had recognized the 'true' feminine nature of the girl under her masculine disguise and that his subsequent actions displayed heterosexual masculine desire? Or was he opening up the possibility of homoerotic exchanges as he chased the 'man' and attempted to kiss 'him'? His earlier admission of being "incapacitated for marriage" did allow erotic possibilities other than heterosexual exchanges within the institution of marriage. Furthermore, as his reticence regarding his patrons Henry Bellomont and Clodio Malier (the "friend" in the Mughal court who seeing him unprotected carried him away to his house) suggests, there are gaps within Manucci's construction of his sexuality that he does not address. Manucci's silence about the nature of his relationships with his past companions, Bellomont and Malier, older men who maintain and protect him, is at odds with his garrulous narrative style. What price did the young Manucci pay for their patronage? Since no details are forthcoming, the specific nature of his private moments with Bellomont and Malier is a matter of speculation. However, the textual silence leaves open the very real possibility of homoerotic exchanges between a youthful Manucci and his older companions. Like his identity, Manucci's sexual preference is malleable, subject to shift with changing circumstances.

I suggest that the particularly charged eroticism of the passage comes from the friction of contradictory but equally alluring signs of male *and* female homoeroticism. First, the anecdote offers up Manucci as the personified center of a *masculine*, homosexual yearning. But is this dread or desire, an occidental tourist's uneasy role reversal, or an unwilling surrender to the voyeuristic, unspoken homoerotic desires that animate many harem fantasies of the West?[55] Manucci's text dramatizes a sense of unease by highlighting his disorientation. His narrative discloses a homoerotic desire, within the

[55] Joseph A. Boone, "Vacation Cruises; or, the Homoerotics of Orientalism," in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, eds., Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (New York: Routledge, 2003), 461, 471. For the themes of cross-dressing, disguise, court sexual dynamics, and Orientalizing in the context of seventeenth century German literature, see Todd Kontje, *German Orientalisms* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 47–56, on Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein's (1635–1683) works, *Ibrahim Sultan* (1673) and *Arminius* (1689–1690).

harem's threatening space, that is neither acknowledged, nor fully subsumed in the rhetoric of concealment. The only way he can penetrate the harem is to assume the impotent body of the eunuch, or to theatrically project his homoerotic desires on a woman disguised as a man, whose "gold mounted sword" sexually codes and manages the threat of the harem. The prince, as Manucci recalls the scene, had expressed his astonishment at his "audacity." Which part of the elaborate scenario was considered audacious? More to the point, did the prince and Manucci mean the same thing when they considered his "audacity?" Did Manucci's audacity lie in his detection of the royal subterfuge? Or was it reflected in his pursuit of a woman dressed as a man? Or in the disclosure of his homoerotic desires?

Then there is the other valence of that frisson and erotic friction, that of errant *feminine* desire. After all, the inversion of power hierarchies in specifically 'female' spaces such as nunneries, public baths and harems also invited speculations of further carnal 'inversions' and transgressive female sexuality. Popular European imagination frequently designated harems, cloisters, and baths as Sapphic terrains of female homoerotics and of perverse feminine sexual activity. Extant transcripts of formal ecclesiastical proceedings against the Italian abbess Benedetta Carlini indicate that Renaissance Europe was familiar with the association of European 'female' spaces with female homoeroticism.[56]

As for Eastern women, by the sixteenth century, gatherings of women in harems and public baths in the Levant seemed to have been almost automatically associated with homoeroticism. Nicholas Nicolay, a companion to the French ambassador to Turkey in the 1550s, wrote explicitly about women who love women. The Levantine

[56] See Janel Mueller, "Troping Utopia: Donne's Brief for Lesbianism," in *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images,* ed., James G. Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 192; see also Judith Brown, *Immodest Acts: the Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). For a discussion of the 'third gender,' see Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution,* v. 1, *Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). For sapphic desire and sexual hybridity in harems, see Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones*, 135–67. On feminine homoerotic desire, see Tom Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); Valerie Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). On female-female eroticism, the discursive link between English female boarding schools and Turkish baths, see Douglas Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Question of Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 119–44.

women, he wrote, are enamored of other women, "as if it were with men." They "handle & grope them euery where at their pleasures, so ful are they of luxuriousness & feminine wantonnes."[57] Nicolay immediately connected the Turkish example to a more recognizable European instance: "Euen as in times past wer the Tribades, of the number whereof was Sapho the Lesbian which transferred the loue wherewith she pursued a 100. women or maidens vpon her only friend Phaon."[58] Manucci may have wished to alert his audience to the presence of a woman whose phallic "gold-mounted sword" enabled her to play the 'man's part' in the secret recesses of the harem. As Valerie Traub argues, tribades "became in this period a powerful model of female erotic transgression, [functioning] both as a cautionary tale and a figure for possible emulation."[59] And prosthetic supplementation of their bodies, such as the "gold mounted sword" described by Manucci, is as Traub further notes, "both additive and substitutive," a prosthesis that displaces and replaces male prerogatives.[60] Evidently, the erotic friction of Manucci's harem encounter generates endless possibilities for extreme pleasure or extreme terror.[61]

Early modern assessments of 'female' spaces generated frissons about the nature and extent of female homoeroticism, and Manucci's anecdote about the "very pretty girl, dressed as a man in European style, with a gold-mounted sword at her side" would have probably

[57] Nicolay, *Nauigations*, 60.

[58] Ibid., 60. Nicolay's reference to Sappho and Phaon summons up a familiar exemplar of erotic excess. The story, familiar to early modern audiences through Ovid (*Heroides* 15, "Epistle of Sappho to Phaon") tells of Sappho's fatal leap from the Leucadian cliff into the ocean for the love of Phaon, a boatman of Mitylene. Nicolay's readers would probably recognize the complexities of sexual identities in Sappho's death for the love of a man, her legendary love for women, and her designation as 'lesbian,' or lover of women, drawn from the name of her home, the island of Lesbos. Similarly, his use of the word "Tribades" alerts the reader to the specific lesbian sexual practices that connected the legend of Sappho to Nicolay's graphic description of the lesbian practices of Levantine women.

[59] Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism, 22*.

[60] Ibid., 22, 196.

[61] At another level of this homoerotic fantasy, Manucci may also be grappling with a version of an alien, female cultural spirit. This is the *fitna*, a personification of a renegade desire, which according to Fatima Mernissi, is expressed in Moroccan culture as the dark, threatening, uncontrollable castrating female demon called Kandisha, who seduces men then penetrates them, possessing their bodies and wills in frenzied and disruptive sexuality. See Fatima Mernissi, "The Meaning of Social Boundaries," in *Feminist Postcolonial Theory*, eds., Lewis and Mills, 496–8.

found complex resonance in his audience. If his speaking subject was constructed from within the patriarchal, specifically heterosexual desires of his presumptive audience, then the implications of such a scenario would have probably titillated even as it deepened anxieties about the loss of masculine control in the harem. Manucci's theatrical staging of the cross-dressed harem woman makes for a remarkable moment as he pauses on the threshold of desire, masking both anxiety and an unwilling attraction for the man/woman before him in the harem.

Whatever the case, when writing about the harem, Manucci's narrative authority is compromised and creolized, like Pocahontas in London or Leo Africanus in Rome. Since leaving Venice and 'home' over fifty years ago, he has spent a lifetime traveling from one culture to another, adopting languages, sexualities, clothes, professions, and identities in giddy succession. He has gone through a process of what Mary Louise Pratt calls "transculturation."[62] Rubiés has argued that transitional figures such as Saint Thomas in India or the virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico involve compromises with native traditions and are of creole, rather than European identities; this recalls the phenomenon that Aravamudan marked as "tropicalization."[63] All such cultural processes require transformation. In other words, Manucci's harem experience encapsulates the process of Manucci being translated into an alien tongue. In accounts such as Manucci's, shifts in the writer's voice, authority, and narrative position indicate that cultural translations of harems to European audiences imply a simultaneous translation of the narrator's personhood, cultural identity, and authorial voice. When travel-writers speak from *inside* the cultural space of a real or imagined harem, they simultaneously step outside the generic and literary conventions that confer authority. Speaking for others requires a ventriloquization of one's own voice.

[62] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 6.

[63] Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology*, 394; Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688–1804* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

AFTERWORD: ONE READER READING

Mary Baine Campbell

One notable effect of these erudite articles on a curious Euro-American reader is the—riveting—effect of wonder. This is not to say that the interdisciplinary ensemble of essays collected here does not provide a hoard, so to speak, of information and articulation. But it is to say that we might have gotten slightly wrong our sense (mostly demystifying, occasionally puritanical) of what "wonder" is, and means, in the last decade or two of its anatomizing. Turning over the final page of the manuscript, now crusted with marginal notes and underlined sources for further reading, I find my mind coming to rest among the pillows and carpets, banners and veils and pavilions of the 'soft architecture' of David Roxburgh's and Pompa Banerjee's very different contributions, or perched wide-eyed in the prow of the little boat that crosses from one page to the other, from Brindisi to Acre, of the 'Monastic' *Itinerary* of Mathew Paris in Daniel Connolly's. I remember the tied tongue of the woman whose long-gone pilgrim husband returns to her 'unrecognizable' from the Holy Land, and the Persian visitor from the court of Tamerlane's son, who appreciates the almost-too-lively paintings of "lions, leopards and tigers" that decorate the soft walls of the brothels of Vijayanagara, brothels which pay the salaries of the national guard, beyond whose soft barracks their pavilion lie. These are the 'postcards,' perhaps, the 'Kodak moments' of which Banerjee speaks, with heavy irony, in the first part of her essay: an essay which goes on to provide two of the best such 'postcards' in the book, as evidence of the impossibility of portable descriptions of Indian 'reality.' I will not soon forget the hand of the blind-folded Italian-born physician in the sultan's harem, reaching behind the curtain that veils his patient to find the "thick, hairy, muscular wrist" of what is not, after all, an imprisoned concubine, waiting to press the hand to her breast, but the sultan him/herself, having his/her little joke.

Wes Williams' postcard is both more honest and less: he does not try to convey any complex of meanings or analysis of broken categories with his Silent Woman: that is a question, as Palmira Brummett remarks, "we leave to our readers." And yet, is it really so hard to speak of it, to speculate? If it is, the last three decades or so of energetic, ground-breaking historical scholarship devoted to such texts, their signifying ways and their social and geo-political contexts, has been in some part wasted. The contribution of feminist scholarship on travel writing has given us a subtle and powerful set of tools for reading the absences and silences, and the compromised or contorted testimony of the women so long absent as authors and subjects from the texts that make up the early modern archive.

Postcolonial and feminist scholarship cannot undo the tragic consequences of Eurocentrism and imperialism in the former sovereignties of Islamicate Asia, nor, it is clear, can it function to obstruct the current wave of neocolonial war and pillage against a still-unknown 'other.' None of the authors whose work is assembled in this volume would identify himself or herself with the Orientalism and sexism of their forbears. Each sets out her or his work as a richly informed critique of one or another finding from the treasure hunt of unselfconscious generations of imperialist scholars and implicitly nationalist critics of literature and the arts. But to judge by the imaginative pleasures of their texts, pleasures probably felt in the writing as well as in the reading, it is undeniable that the curiosity and wonder that motivated so much of the indispensable Orientalist archive, and the largely nineteenth-century creation of that archive, persists. It persists across the attitudinal barrier erected by any number of recent post-colonial dissections, my own included, of the structures, motives and consequences of the cognitive emotions of 'curiosity' and 'wonder,' of 'exoticism' and 'fetishism,' and despite the thorough debunking of colonialist scholarship and 'grand narrative' inspired by Edward Said's revolutionary polemic in *Orientalism* and Talal Asad's groundbreaking collection, *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*.[1] If we accept as a sad reality current relations between humanist disciplines and ex- or neo-imperialist governments—or rather, the near-total absence of them—we must consider what moti-

[1] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); Talal Asad, ed., *Anthrooplogy and the Colonial Encounter* (New York: Humanities Books, 1973).

vates and supports our scholarly interests, and what ends they are most likely to serve.[2]

I've studied and written a fair amount about wonder and curiosity, travel and the 'East,' genre, ethnology, knowledge and ideology myself over the last twenty years: I'm a good candidate for one version of an ideal reader for this book. But stuck in Paris, 3,500 miles from my own books and convalescing from a surgery that makes even Paris libraries hard to reach, I'm responding not as an academic expert but rather, more precisely, as a Reader—even if as a Reader who has also been a writer, and shared the dilemmas these writers face in representing the shifty representations that form our best but also most elusive clues to the past as it was lived.

I have been fascinated by these essays as well as enjoying their imaginative stimulus and poignant postcards. I have learned a great deal, and I like learning. From Rubiés I have taken the notion of the old Chinese proverb, shared across most of Eurasia for several centuries, of 'the world's three eyes.' Anyone who has read much travel writing of the period covered by this book has run across the proverb before, probably many times, but it was Rubiés who showed me, in rich detail, the universal hidden in plain view: an idea of 'civilization' that apparently communicated to all of the societies it hierarchically aligned, the universal solvent that made long-distance diplomacy—intercultural conversation—possible at all. Although Rubiés here is especially interested in teaching us the contents of the varying ambassadorial views his article conveys, he is also teaching us to think again about the incommensurability of 'cultures' this generation's scholarship has tended to take as an article of faith.

From Roxburgh I have not only learned the concept of 'soft architecture,' which invokes so clearly (and even beautifully) the complex of profound feelings that divides, from the point of view of mainly agricultural societies, the 'civilized' from the 'barbarian' (and that genders that divide), but also an articulation of the way in which Timur and his successors *used* that distinction to mark out their own specific imperial power—neither bending to nor dependent upon the

[2] Mari Ruti's recent *Reinventing the Soul: Posthumanist Theory and Psychic Life* (New York: Other Press, 2006) offers one attempt to consider ways to integrate our work in colonial and post-colonial studies (to which this book makes a contribution) with a more profound and communicative understanding of the theories that underlie it and its liberatory potential: ways that can acknowledge the curiosity and wonder that are among the motive forces that energize all historians who have not despaired.

'hard' architecture of the conquered society. And finally, there is the detailed fact of a specifically European admiration for this achievement: its splendor, its *effectiveness*. Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton have already shown us one powerful consequence for Renaissance European imperial states of that effectiveness, in their analysis of the crucial importance of tapestry—the soft inner walls that spoke not only of wealth but of an interconnected Eurasia, a conversation in textiles between 'Western' and 'Eastern' powers. (Even the horses that supplied the nomadic 'East' with its mobility became a conversation—commercial and aesthetic—between two different modes of life.)[3]

Daniel Connolly's careful study of the differences between two different 'books'—two manuscripts of "the waye out of Engelonde" (as Sir John Mandeville titled the first chapter of his book of travels about fifty years later) brings to light the importance of national concerns in the production of world-geographical knowledge, earlier than the specifically print-based analysis of nationalism that Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* so influentially provided in the 1980s.[4] (One can find a perhaps less careful but still convincing account of the emergence of an English nation from insular world maps and geographical writing of the period in Kathy Lavezzo's *Angels on the Edge of the World*, to which inquiry Connolly's article might be said to contribute an important new chapter.[5]) But beyond the significance of national concerns, I have learned with equal vividness the idea of the reader, the armchair pilgrim (though doubtless the 'armchair' was a cold stone bench), in his or her *bodily* involvement with a geographical book. In a world where *chemins de Jerusalem* were inlaid on the floors or walls of churches, for the disabled (or lazy) penitent to trace with safer footsteps—or a finger!—this bodily experience would have had more meaning and impact than it does even for an academic establishment newly fascinated by the physicality, and mobility, of the *books* that carried our long-studied texts.[6]

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[3] See Jerry Brotton and Lisa Jardine, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art between East and West* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000).

[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, revised ed., 1994).

[5] Kathy Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature and English Community, 1000–1534* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[6] On *chemins de Jerusalem*, see W.H. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths: Their History and Development* (Dover Publications, 1970).

What dimensionality this reveals to readers who study their 'books' on glowing screens in warm studies and libraries, and never unfold a page to find their little boat approaching the harbors of the Holy Land! Like most academics my age, I probably read more loose-leaf manuscripts than published books and articles now—this one, for instance—and dislike the impediments of the form. But I am suddenly reminded how much more I have tended to learn from work that I must encounter so physically—as physically, almost, as the courtly staff to whom the 'Royal Version' of Paris' Itinerary was destined, in the search to prop up Henry III's or Edward I's claims to the whole island of Britain.

Wes Williams' treatment of Protestant pilgrimage in particular (of which I know little), in the era of 'discoverie' so much better studied with reference to the New World, taught me to think, for the first time, of the signal importance of friendship in travel beyond the bounds of Christendom, or Islam, or the civilization of home. I had studied the friendship of the stranded New World *hidalgo* explorer Cabéza de Vaca's relations with his companion, Estaban the Moor, but the combination of the Protestant Englishman Henry Timberlake's two friendships with a fellow Protestant and a "Moor" and his dilemma, when faced by them with a choice between two kinds of dangerous foreign contagion, is a richer story. It is one well complemented by Banerjee's account of Manucci, the traveler who never comes 'home,' whose whole career is spent as a member of profoundly alien courts. They become his actual home, but with regard to them his book, nevertheless, exists as an unsuccessful claim to an essential European-ness.

Williams' essay brought home clearly how it is in verse (or in dream), not in prose, that displaced travelers best express that deeper claim to identity: the simple fact of homesickness—as evidenced elsewhere in this collection by the verses of ʿAbd al-Razzaq ("I am from the region of the beloved [Muhammed], not from a foreign realm. O Ever-Vigilant, return me to my companions"), and his prophetic dream of a message from his sultan at the nadir of his diplomatic disappointment in Calicut. I know of no extended study of travel verse as yet: Williams' close and suggestive reading of Lithgow's conversation with his Muse should stimulate further work on its generic protocols, and the implications of the form for the sharp development of vernacular poetries in the European Renaissance.

But it will be the 'postcard' of the French pilgrim Philippe's homebound wife that stays with me the longest, that haunts. Was she glad to see him? Did she see first and foremost that "he" was no longer "he" who left her? Had she fallen in love with another stay-at-home while he was gone from her; had his return disrupted her own itinerary of the heart? Why is she silent? Williams translates "*et ne peust parler à moi*" as "she could not speak to me." One might also translate "could not talk with me." What would they have to talk about now, as a couple, in front of the whole company and the "*recepveur de Monsieur le mareschal de la Marche*"? What did he say to *her*? "Hi honey, I'm home!"? Williams' silence transports us toward the action of the imagination.

Pompa Banerjee has used her imagination to convey the refracted and untransmissable world of perception and communication of a special kind of traveler, the ethnographer's specter: a reporter who has led his life from adolescence 'Elsewhere,' in this case mostly the Mughal court at Delhi. Even the extended claim to European belonging of this expatriate Venetian's *voyage* confuses his (now merely linguistic) location: it is written in French, Italian and Portuguese, depending on the traveling amanuensis of the moment. What one might have imagined as a last internal location, even in the inevitable physical and cultural displacements of a polyglot expatriate, Manucci's gender: even and especially that is brought into question and left undecided by the 'postcards' Banerjee provides of the traveler/foreigner's unusual, and finally impossible 'penetration' of his sultan's harem. This apogee of the European trope of penetration (the motive force of all ethnography, no matter how 'progressive') is a wonderful inversion of the Heisenberg principle: it is not the investigator who inevitably alters the object, but the *relation* of the seeker and the elusive sought. In the witness's 'Kodak moments'—his penetration of the veils within veils of the patient in the harem and his subsequent chasing of a female concubine dressed and armed as a man, before the laughing eyes of the sultan-joker—the genders and sexualities of all players are brought into question, constructed as they are by theatrical protocols of visibility. Where gender and sexuality are as fused as they seem to be in both 'European' and Mughal eyes, what genders do we perceive—or do the players perceive—in the physician who seeks the pulse of a concubine-sultan, or in the European male who chases a female man around the harem for the viewing pleasure of a sultan in whose harem heretofore all audiences have

been female? All players fall between genders, all players are members of the audience as well. The relations are theatrical, those of viewer and viewed, and they 'go both ways.' If anyone is in charge, it is not a masculine Sultan but a multi-gendered Joker, the card that can play any role in the game when rule-determined chance unveils it.

As teachers and scholars in a putatively post-colonial, post-Orientalist world, we had hoped/meant to part the veil of ignorance behind which lay, we might have fantasized, the pulsing wrist of the supine Princess of Peace. We found instead the "thick, hairy and muscular wrist" of the unconscious—rather indeed of the consciousness—of the indelibly ex-colonial and neo-colonial societies in which we 'Euro-capitalists' live. The article this instructive failure brings to mind is not included in this collection. It is a hoax, an ethno-historical hoax, including a précis of a 'voyage' to Europe, by the *dix-huitièmiste* Laurent Loty, published in the French journal *Alliage*.[7] It is a story, like Manucci's, of a rediscovered manuscript of inter-world encounter (itself temporally located in the moment of cultural transition from nomadic to sedentary life that we see differently thanks to Roxburgh), in which the mirroring is so intense that both represented worlds, and neither, seem Europe and not-Europe, and our location—our 'identity'—is indeterminate. The account, by an imaginary Margazadi scholar, of the once-nomadic Margazadi people, includes the précis of a voyage made some years earlier by another Margazadi, a young merchant, the son of a cousin of a now-deceased sage named Roche Claire. The voyager discovered in "Matta" (which the natives call "Europe"), the astonishing notion—struggling, perhaps, to be born among the younger people of his own society, and intuited by the dead sage (whose written text on the subject of the "*rêve contrôlé*," in a culture that forbids writing, is kept secret and studied only by an "authorized" group)—of "*l'état conscient*." Of consciousness, of dreaming, as it seems to this traveler from a region of literal dreamers, while somehow *in control of* the dream. Matta/Europe during his voyage there is agog with the recent discovery of

[7] Laurent Loty, « Le rêve contrôlé ou la découverte du rêveur Roche Claire, clan Magazadi, » *Alliage* 44 (2000), pp. 60–5. The proofreader at *Alliage* misspelled the name of the clan described in the article—it is Margazadi, not Magazadi; the copy-editor also 'corrected' archaisms and signs of basic orality in the language of the imaginary text. For a still more significant error of incomprehension, read on.

its corollary, "*l'inconscient*," which seems to—or does it?—resemble the ordinary state of the Margazadi mind, which they call the "*rêve*."

> Le comportement des hommes de toutes les contrées est-il universel, à cette différence près que l'activité de l'esprit s'appellera "rêve" ici et "état conscient" là-bas ? Ou bien, les habitants de l'Europe sont-ils véritablement en "rêve contrôlé", alors que nous sommes simplement en train d'accomplir les gestes et les rêves les plus ordinaires ? Y a-t-il seulement une différence entre ces deux états ?[8]

As if to illustrate precisely Banerjee's sense of the transmission of such 'postcards,' the compositor at *Alliage* reversed the negative of a photograph intended to illustrate the sacred, secret writing of the dead sage, who had felt, after a lifetime of teaching the young how to dream properly, that he could not continue in good faith. It was a page transcribed in mirror writing from Loty's own manuscript. What was meant by the author to lead us physically to the mirror to decipher—and discover!—becomes instantly legible, and therefore meaningless, script, transferred 'faithfully' by the miracle of modern technology, to the reading public, who are thus able to read it without the mirror's help.[9] But "that is not it, that is not it at all." *Tradittore, tradutore*.

Wonder, in Bacon's famous formulation, is "broken knowledge," the only kind most of the contributors to this volume acknowledge, despite the inspiring belief of the historian Rubiés in the possibility of larger fragments, of a more fully formed and self-conscious reading. These 'postcards from the edge' may teach us to be active readers, to employ our historical imaginations—and, one may hope, in better faith than the readers and writers of the postcards Banerjee critiques. Of all the wondrous forms of the 'book' of travels our editor has invited us to contemplate, none may be more consequential than

[8] "Is the behavior of men of all countries universal, with this difference, that the activity of the mind is called 'dream' here and 'consciousness' there? Or indeed are the inhabitants of Europe truly experiencing the 'controlled dream' while we are simply going about actions and dreams of the most ordinary kind? Is there any difference between these two states?"

[9] In the easily available online version of the article, the illustration is not reproduced at all! The printed version of the article includes, in addition to the unfortunately reversed image, an erratum sheet showing the original MS page of mirror-script (written out at the last minute before the volume went to press by the *Alliage* editor, who had been forbidden to indulge her peculiar talent as a child). A photocopy of the article, with the originally intended mirror-script illustration in its proper place, can be obtained from the author: laurent.loty@univ-paris-diderot.fr.

the mirror. This may be a more modest goal, perhaps (and perhaps not), than those with which so many of us began our work on the mutual blindness of opposing civilizations: teach the compositor to believe his dazed and dazzled eyes.

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